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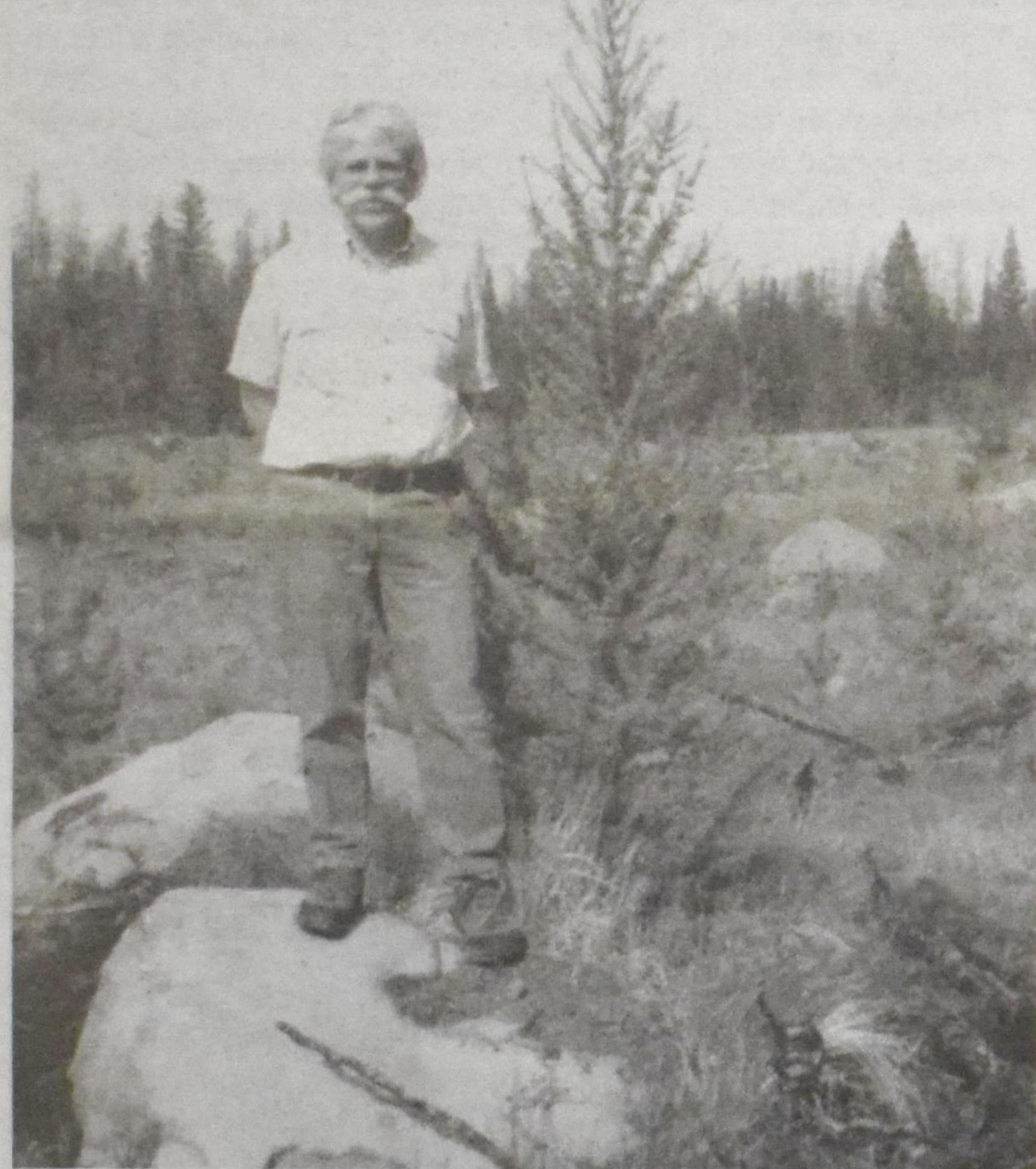
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Keeping B.C. forests healthy: A Christian forester does his part



Clarence Kooistra in the Cariboo region in the centre of BC next to a Western Larch that shows excellent growth.

Bert Witvoet

VERNON, B.C. — "What's a nice preacher's kid from Metropolitan Toronto doing working as a forester in British Columbia?" I ask Clare (Clarence) Kooistra, a former student of mine. Clare smiles and tells me that it was a little bit an act of rebellion on his part. He didn't want to be a

School in 1969, he spent one year at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, and three years at the University of Toronto attaining a bachelor's degree in forestry.

Forestry combines a lot of the sciences, he says: biology (his major), geology, climatology, geography and soil science, thus providing

Owl, but once you spend a summer in the forests of B.C., surrounded by hordes of mosquitoes, the idealism wears off and reality sets in, he admits. Nevertheless, it's a reality he loves. Like many others working in the forests, his body no longer reacts to mosquito bites.

From public to private

Right after graduating from the U of T, Clare was hired by the B.C. Ministry of Forestry as a nursery administrative forester. At that time all the tree nurseries were owned and operated by the Ministry, but over time these have all gone private. It was Clare's task to advise these nurseries and do research that would enhance the maintenance and growth of new forests. His main concern was the production and quality of plants, primarily conifers, as B.C. forests contain mainly conifer species: chief among them are White/Englemann Spruce, Lodgepole Pine, Douglas Fir, and Western Red Cedar.

During his 31 years of service

for the Ministry, the success rate of seedling survival has risen from 60 to above 90 per cent. Most of that is due to a change in practice from open-field seeding to greenhouse seeding in small containers with peat moss soil. Pulling up plants from an open field means you lose part of the root system whereas planting containerized seedlings means the root system stays intact. The change from public to private nurseries and increased harvesting have also resulted in an increase in production and planting from 40 million to 250 million seedlings a year.

Research for the future

Five years ago Clare accepted an early-retirement package from the Ministry and started his own consulting company, Conifer Consulting. Today, at age 59, he is doing research for two projects that he hopes will benefit the growth and production of new forests. The first project involves the Lodgepole Pine (the name comes from the use of this pine by Natives

when building teepees). When the seed germinates it produces a few branches at the base of the seedling. As the tree grows, these side branches often grow to the height of the main stem, thus resulting in two or three trees growing out of one plant. However, the competition for nourishment results in smaller trees instead of one big tree. Early trials have shown that by clipping away the side branches before planting the seedling, the tree has a better chance of growing into a healthy mature adult tree.

The second research project involves the Yellow Cedar. This species is rare in the interior of B.C. where only a few hectares of these cedars can be found. They are more plentiful in the coastal areas. Part of the reason for this small population is the fact that Yellow Cedars do not survive fires very well. But greater success in fighting and controlling fires has reduced that concern. Cedar trees yield a higher value wood as compared to pine and spruce.

See **Forests** on page 3

Strike prevention 101: Fresh thinking on Toronto's walkout

Chris Bosch

TORONTO, Ont. — Several years ago our union was involved in an organizing campaign to represent the workers at a recycling plant in Ottawa. The conditions were atrocious. In the middle of winter, workers at a massive assembly line were exposed to an icy blast of air each time a recycling truck entered the sorting area. The line moved quickly, requiring workers to sort trash at breath-taking speeds. Occasionally, a rat would ramble down the line, unhappy about his transitory environment, and bite the outstretched glove-covered



hand or arm of an unsuspecting worker. This was not the worst of it. From time to time, work-

ers would get pricked by used hypodermic needles, resulting in

See **Strike** on page 2

*Our economies are built on the assumption
that the environment remains the same.*

preacher like his dad, Remkes Kooistra, but he chose his career mostly because of his love for the sciences. Maybe it was also because his family did a lot of camping, he adds, that he grew to love nature. After graduating from Toronto District Christian High

a holistic approach to his chosen profession. Clare likes that sense of wholeness, an appreciation he traces back to his Reformational roots. Initially, working in forestry also provided a romantic flavour for him, reminiscent of books like Grey

News

Strike *continued from page 1*

severe psychological distress for the worker. The insult added to this litany of injuries was the poor response of the employer: "Wear warmer clothes to work. Watch for unwanted pests as the garbage moves down the line. Go to the hospital after your shift to address the needle poke." If ever there was a case for union advocacy, this was it.

Thankfully, many employers have a deep and enduring respect for their employees; this scenario is not the case in every workplace. There are instances, however, where the presence of a union is necessary for addressing and healing the brokenness that persists in our workplaces.

A union's purpose is the provision of justice in the economic sphere. Assuming this starting place, what are we to make of the City of Toronto's strike with CUPE Locals 416 and 79? Is the provision of justice taking place in this conflict? What approach can we take to increase understanding and reduce the tendency to make quick judgments? Is striking or an employer lock-out of employees an appropriate instrument for resolving workplace disagreements?

Desperate measures

Strikes and lock-outs are like declaring war in the workplace. By law, they take place at the end of the normal collective bargaining process and only after mandatory conciliation efforts have been exhausted by the parties. At this point, some unions and employers believe they have no alternative but to take aggressive action to back up their demands at the bargaining table because this is what they have promised their constituents. This is not dissimilar to the negotiations between nation-states that decide

to stop talking and pick up arms to settle matters "once and for all," and the result is wide-spread harm.

What is needed in situations like the strike in Toronto is a stance that respects the parties' right to assert the interests of their constituents while preserving the dignity of people, the inherent goodness of work, and the importance of relationships. During a strike all of these values come under attack. Strikers are labelled as lazy and unappreciative; employers are called "tight-fisted"; employees who wish to work are censured by their union for reasons of solidarity, and the parties find it increasingly difficult to talk to each other, requiring, in some cases, the cessation of aggressive action as a condition of continued talks. The bottom line is that strikes do irreparable harm, sacrificing what is most important to both parties.

However, the reality is that par-

effects of this "declaration of war" in the workplace?

Pre-emptive possibilities

First, we can apply a "theory of just war for labour relations." All decisions regarding workplace hostilities would be filtered through a series of justification questions. This would ensure, in part, that the parties are guided by prudence. A theory of just war for labour relations would prompt the same soul-searching questions as governments consider before declaring war. Is striking or a lock-out a last resort? Do we have the right intention? This process does not preclude the right to strike, it only identifies the conditions under which strong action will be taken and how it will be carried out.

Another possibility is known as the virtual strike. In this situation, employees and the employer carry



ties will continue to make decisions to strike and lock-out in full knowledge of the consequences. As long as these actions remain available to unions and employers, what suggestions could be made to mitigate the

on operations as they normally would, but no one gets paid during the work stoppage. In the private sector the employer would not receive any profits, and in the public sector, like the City of Toronto strike, citizens would not pay for services such as daycare, ferry rides, pool access, day camps and so on. The point is neither side would benefit financially during a strike or a lock-out, which creates an incentive to work harder at reaching an agreement. An ancillary benefit is that the citizens would not be harmed by the disagreement and in fact would profit marginally by not paying for services. Virtual strikes were used with some success during WWII to settle contract disputes with weapon manufacturers. They have also been used more recently in a Florida bus strike and at an

TO strike stats

Allan Bick

On June 22, the 24,000 outside and inside municipal workers of Toronto voted to go on strike, affecting the city's garbage collection, among other things. This was the start of one of the longest garbage strikes in Toronto's history. To cope, the city set up 19 temporary dump sites to avoid illegal dumping and sprayed these sites repeatedly to avoid or eradicate potential pest problems.

And the main source of contention between the unions and the city? Bankable sick days.

These are unused sick days that can be put towards early retirement. Neither the city nor the unions seemed willing to budge on this, and the issue started to polarize the community. Some supported the unions' hard-won benefits, but others felt that anyone who has a job should not be complaining.

Mainstream media sources did not discuss bankable sick days much, nor did they report on the other services being affected by the strike: ambulances, social assistance and park services. While the two crucial services were still being offered, albeit at a reduced level, many programs run by city parks workers (day camps and swimming lessons) were almost completely cut. The only upside of this strike is the possibility that Torontonians may take a hard look at how much garbage they produce.

After six long weeks, the strike was resolved on Friday, July 31. The unions voted yes to a tentative deal on Thursday, and – after a long day of debate – city council ratified the deal Friday evening. Interestingly, the unions resumed work Friday morning, before it was certain that the city would pass the deal. This may have been the wisest move made by anybody since the walkout began.



Italian airline. In the last example, the company donated its profits to charity.

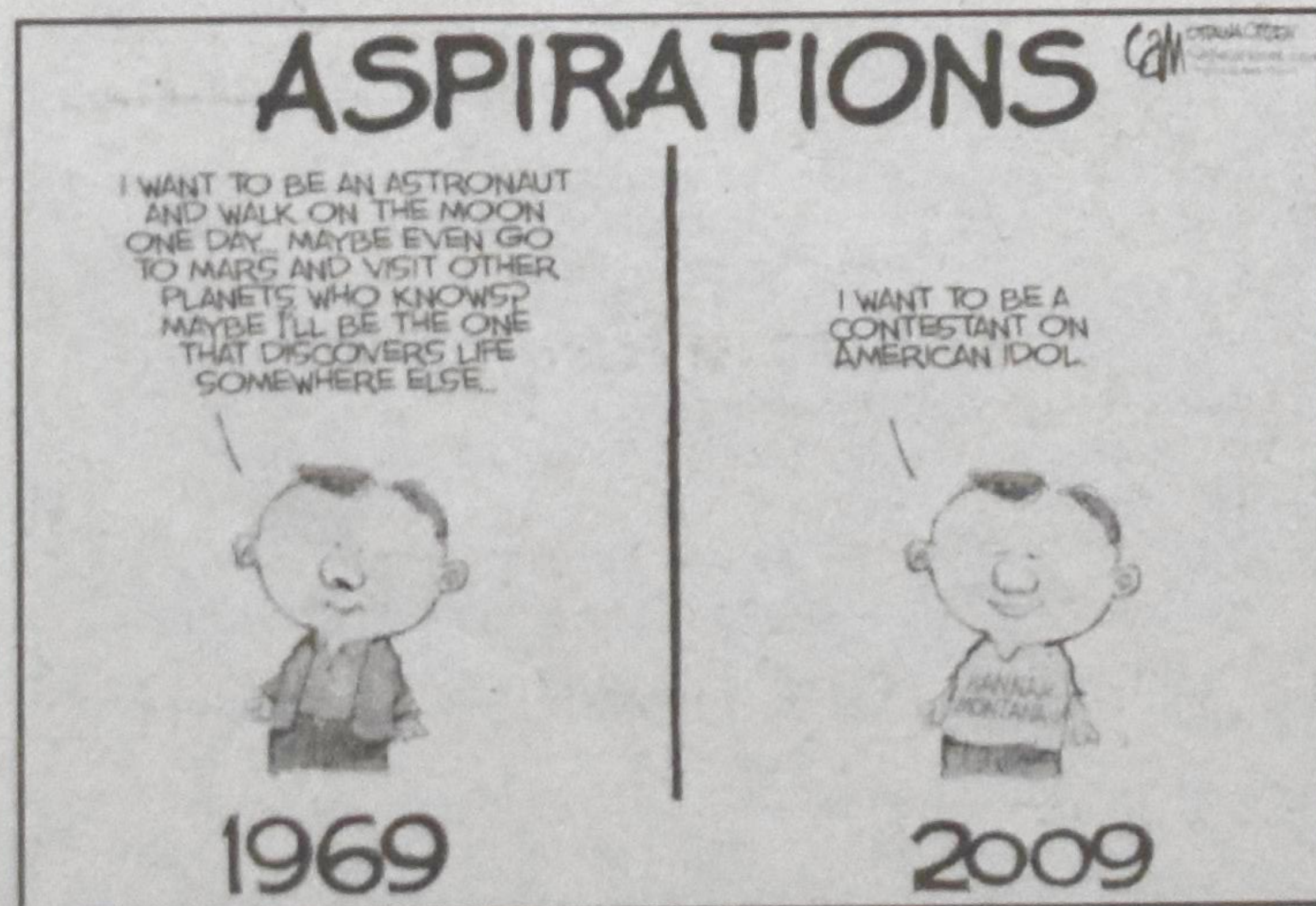
Currently, the strike in Toronto is actually creating an operating budget surplus while 30,000 workers strike. This is a problem. Given the financial distress of the city, a prolonged strike improves the fiscal health of city coffers and provides a disincentive to bargain. Virtual strikes would not work in all situations, but they would help mitigate the effect of workplace hostilities on innocent beneficiaries of the city's services – its citizens.

A third suggestion is to require the suspension of pay during job action for union representatives and employer-side negotiators. This course of action would curb brinkmanship bargaining where the parties wait until the strike/lock-out deadline to make a deal, hoping that the prospect of a work stoppage will force the other's hand. It would also eliminate the practice of holding strike votes before collective bargaining begins. This produces defensiveness at the negotiation table, where one party is constantly under the spectre of job action. It

is too easy for representatives of labour and the employer to negotiate to impasse when they know they will continue to get paid. Only the shared economic insecurity of a work stoppage will encourage negotiators to resolve their differences quickly and satisfactorily.

Our brokenness – in the form of hubris, competitiveness and spite – must be hemmed from time to time by rules of engagement to ensure that the common good can flourish. These three suggestions may be a good start. Regardless of our personal views on the strike in Toronto, we all have a responsibility to support unions and governments, who, in their own right, are instruments of common grace. Let's not be quick to condemn one institution or another when the going gets tough. Instead, let's seek understanding and a course of action that respects the dignity of people, the value of work and importance of relationships.

Chris Bosch works in the Research and Education department of the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC).



News/Politics

Forestry *continued from p. 1*

Ten years ago, foresters, under the encouragement of the Ministry, started to experiment by planting Yellow Cedars side by side with spruce trees. Clare has just finished measuring the growth of these trees. At this point the spruce trees are a little taller than the cedars, but it's too early to tell whether that is significant. Once the yellow cedars reach beyond the level of surrounding grasses and brush, they may do better.

Stewardship matters

Clare believes in what he is doing. Keeping the B.C. forests healthy is what every person should be interested in, he feels. We are stewards of creation, and we need to carefully manage our resources. Providing greater variety of trees may well prove beneficial in the fight against harmful insects, disease organisms and climate change. Foresters are altruistic, he says, in that their work is always done for future generations. He himself will never see the forests that he has helped plant mature. It takes between 80 to 120 years before a forest can be harvested, depending on the species.

He is pleased that the Ministry is looking into the possible effects of climate change. Although this process is ongoing, he says, never before have we witnessed such a rapid climate change. He is worried that the forests may not be able to adapt quickly enough to changing conditions. "Trees are the lungs of the earth, as they absorb the carbon dioxide we exhale. Yet we have done a lousy job of protecting the environment," he says. "Some of your readers may question the fact that we humans are significantly impacting world climate. But whether scientists are right or not about this impact, as stewards we have a responsibility to treat the earth with respect, and to use it with the intent of returning it to a

Clarence shows a healthy pine in his back yard protected against the mountain pine beetle.



A Lodgepole Pine in the field that has sprouted a competitive side branch.

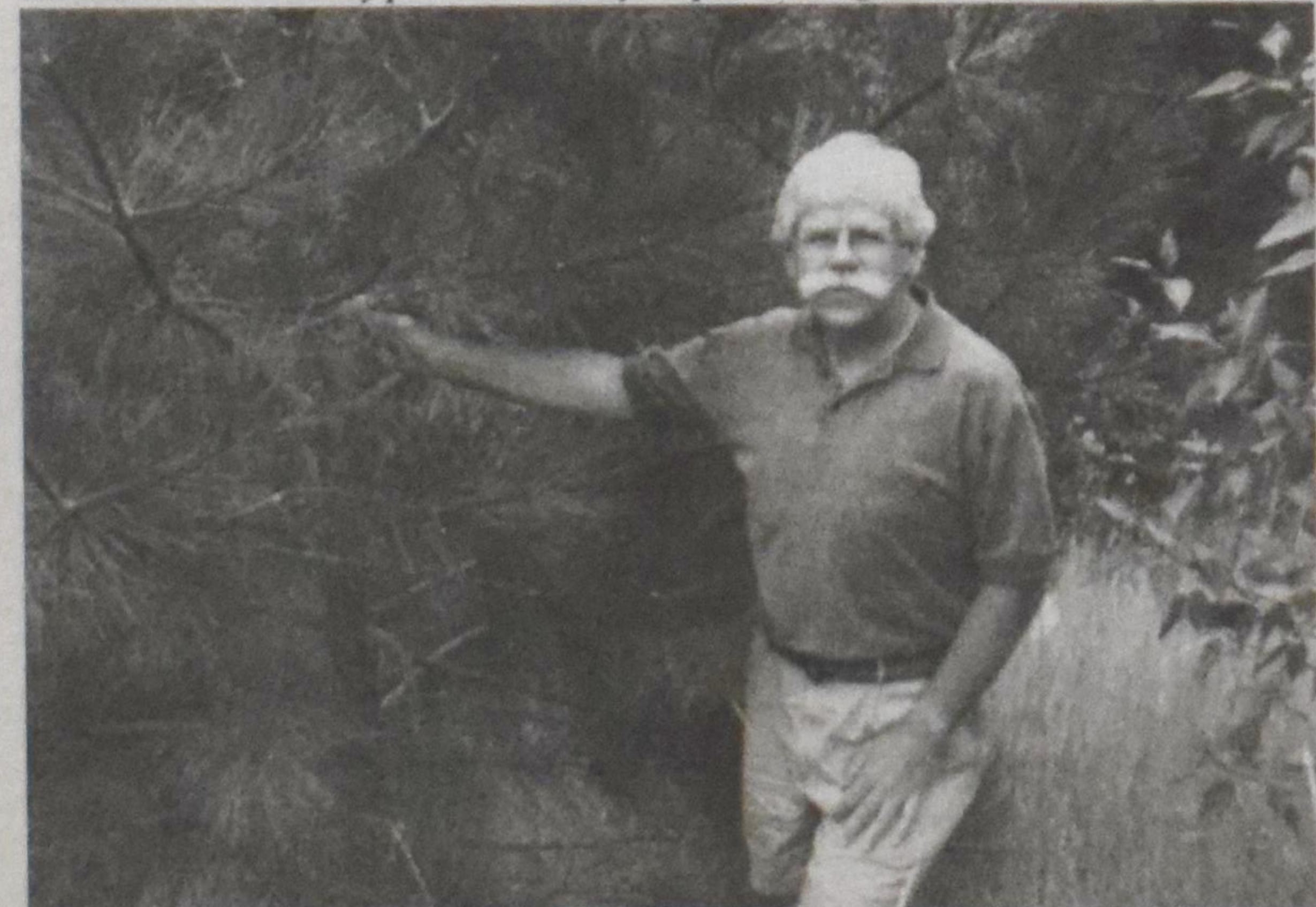
healthy state. Why should we pour so much pollution into the air just because we can do it?"

Reasons for concern

As regional chair of the Red Cross, Clare is also thinking about the effects of climate change on refugees throughout the world. Will the Western world be able to offer asylum to others when their own economies are dying because of climatic damage? he wonders. "Our economies are built on the assumption that the environment remains the same." That may not be the case, he thinks. According to certain scientific predictions, his own town, Vernon, may turn into a desert town in the not-too-distant future.

As we were talking on the veranda of his home, we looked out at the smoke-filled valley below. Nearby forest fires had been spewing out ashes and smoke into the Okanagan valleys for days. It was a potent reminder that climate change is causing damage to the earth and to human health.

"Not that I'm a pessimist," Clare adds after offering me a second cup of coffee. I look at him with amusement. Forty-some years ago I would have called him a pessimist for painting me a desert in this wonderfully green setting of his backyard filled with numerous healthy conifers. He and his neighbours have been able to ward off the murderous mountain pine beetle by attaching a

**Fr. Neuhaus: high-brow populist**

A few months ago in this space I remarked on the passing of Fr. Richard John Neuhaus and the legacy he leaves behind, especially the journal *First Things* (FT). Though I myself, like many others, was influenced by his writings, I cannot call myself an unqualified fan.

Although Neuhaus was at his best when cutting through the absurdities of late liberalism, he could never bring himself to mount a radical critique of liberalism per se, preferring to claim its legacy as his own. Here is a typical passage: "As stated in the Declaration of Independence, just government is derived from the consent of the governed" (FT, November 2002). Neuhaus obviously echoes the views of Thomas Jefferson and, ultimately, of the 17th-century English political philosopher John Locke, one of the fathers of modern liberalism.

Yet if consent is a necessary precondition for just government, it cannot stand at its origin. Government, rather, has a *divine*, not a *popular* mandate, to do justice. If Neuhaus were correct in his understanding of the role of popular consent, one would have to conclude that only democratic governments are legitimate – a view that has no biblical warrant and would delegitimize virtually every political system prior to the 20th century. It may be that for now democracy is the *least worst* form of government, to paraphrase Winston Churchill, but its absence does not automatically add up to injustice.

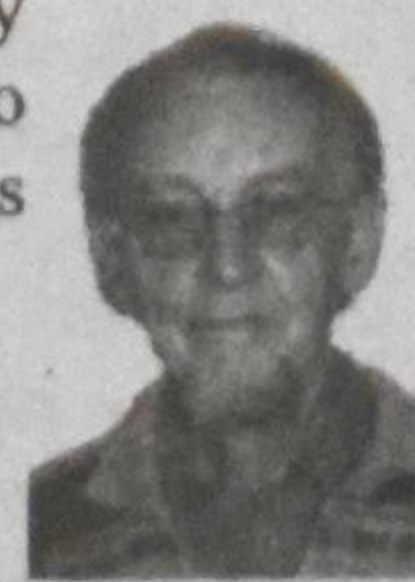
Even a nondemocratic state is called to do justice to all individuals and communities within its territory. The Apostle Paul observed that the autocratic Roman state possessed a God-given task of punishing evil and rewarding good (Romans 13). By concentrating so heavily on the American polity and its particular political traditions, including the founders' classical liberalism, Neuhaus appeared to play down the universality of this jural task.

Given this overemphasis on consent of the governed, I have often thought that Neuhaus could

little orange pouch to the trunk of their pine trees. The pouch emits a scent that suggests to visiting beetles that the trees are already occupied by other mountain pine beetles. So the visitors move on. Does Clare's hope rest on these types of remedies? I wonder.

But I know better. His hope is the kind of hope that I included in my lessons back in the 1960s. It's a combination of seeking to do the Lord's will on earth and looking forward to a renewed creation. I won't call him a pessimist today. Besides, there is a pretty good chance that the student knows more than his master, certainly when it comes to preserving forests in B.C.

Bert is visiting family in BC and AB.

**Principalities & Powers**

David T. Koyzis

best be described as a high-brow populist. In his FT articles one reads, on the one hand, carefully thought-out and witty diatribes against the debased character of contemporary popular culture, and, on the other, denunciations of the political and cultural élites for pushing secularizing reforms against the presumably less corrupt mores of a "confusedly Christian America." That these two emphases were not altogether compatible in no way prevented Neuhaus from expressing them.

His repeated arguments against judicial activism were often phrased more as a "usurpation of democracy" than as an over-extension of normative judicial authority. During the latter part of his life, the abortion issue took centre stage for Neuhaus, who lost no opportunity to criticize the US Supreme Court's *Roe v Wade* decision (1973) decreeing a constitutional right to abortion. This ruling was the primary motivation for his heavy focus on the courts. That public opinion polls in his final years indicated diminishing support for the abortion licence appeared to justify his confidence in the basic goodness of the American people, and thus of democracy.

Nevertheless, if the polls had been going the other way, I have no doubt that Neuhaus would have continued the struggle to protect the unborn even against an unsupportive or complacent public. His sense of justice, both for black Americans in the 1960s and for infants in the womb thereafter, placed at least practical limits on his professed liberalism and implicit populism. May Fr. Neuhaus rest in peace until the resurrection.



David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, and is the author of the award-winning Political Visions and Illusions (InterVarsity Press). He blogs at: byzantinecalvinist.blogspot.com.

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Editorials

Through a mirrorball darkly: Life, death, and the King of Pop



Brett Alan Dewing

The recent spectacle over Michael Jackson's death speaks volumes about our culture of celebrity and idolatry. It also has a lot to say about our attitudes toward death.

As thousands of people lined streets and courtyards across the U.S., weeping and eulogizing their dead idol, I wondered how many were crying over the entire idea of death. In our world, death has been dressed up as the ultimate villain in the melodrama. It stands to one side, twirling a wax-thick mustache and bragging about its future victims' inability to stop their own demise. And, true to form, the players in the drama run themselves ragged trying to avoid death and ignore its advance.

It is true that death was never meant to be. It is the epitome of the non-creational. In a sense, it is humanity's addition to God's good creation, and we're stuck with it. But is it a malevolent force, a bully in a black cape?

What were those Jacko mourners really bewailing? Was it the fate of Michael's soul? The end of his recording career? The symbolic death of an era? Their own lost childhoods?

I have never been one to cry at funerals. I find life to be much more tear-worthy than death. I have no high hopes for Michael Jackson's salvation, and that is truly sad. But no more so than the thousands of doomed souls who depart every day. I cannot mourn his future career, as his artistic peak has been HIStory for a long time now. And I certainly shed no tears for the period he defined in American life, or my own small experience of it.

What I believe most mourners cry over is the feeling that they will never see their loved one again. But if both parties reside in Christ, that feeling is nothing but a mirage.

Though I am found to be cold by many around me, I find none of these things to be as awful as they would have me believe. I have always seen death as a life event. It is the moment when a person enters a realm far more real than this earth, be it fire or light. And if anything, that calls for celebration for the redeemed dead and reflection of missed opportunities for the unsaved.

Death itself

No, what we cry over – the only thing worth our salt – is the very existence of death. It should no longer be a surprise to us, but it will always remain a tangible proof

of the Fall. It is our biggest regret. We let death in the door, and then ran and hid.

And all is not as it should be. All is very *unshould*, if you will. Sin rules the day, and death is its mature form. It has become a fact, but it will always be something of a fiction, a cruel prank, a just injustice. And in the face of that wrongness, what can we do but weep?

However, contrary to all earthly wisdom, death is far from the end. If life's breadth can even be measured, it is the downbeat of the symphony's first note. And we, as people of the Book, have seen the score. And it is the defeat of death.

If you haven't tired yet of metaphors, let me try another. Death is as a nursery matron, dishing out cruel but just desserts as a way of bringing her charges to maturity and an interaction with a much wider, more vital world. We wish that we could grow into our eternity ourselves, but that option has been rescinded. We are now under death's stern watch, but we are only under her thumb for a brief time.

A private public life

But what does one man's death – or one pop star's death – mean to the world? In the case of Michael Jackson, we are left with wild stories that test both extremes. Newscasters across the world have chimed in with opinions about the cause of death, the possible crimes committed by and against Mr. Jackson, the man's health and lifestyle, his children, his ex-wives, his friends.... Everywhere one navigates these days, they are confronted with soft news of Jackson's life and death. His nose was prosthetic, his doctor may have "killed" him, his children have an uncertain heritage and even more uncertain future, he was guilty or innocent of child molestation and his fears about a comeback tour may have led to his semi-self-destruction. On and on the newsfeed goes, and where it stops no one knows.

His was, above all, an enigma despite all the public scrutiny. And, in that, he was everyman. None of us is truly known by our fellow humans. None of us is truly knowable. Our salvation, our motivations, our hopes and fears and priorities are unsearchable. And perhaps one of reasons that death shatters us is the reminder that we will no longer be able to plumb those depths; we will not now know the dead until we too are born to eternity. And that terror unleashes another, that we are never going to be known ourselves. Death physicalizes the existential separation between all humanity.

Communion and community

And yet, we are known fully by a mighty and sovereign God. We are adrift, yet we are cradled. We may feel our aloneness, but we need not fear it. We may find ourselves to be a riddle, but our souls are laid out in front of our Father's eyes. It is all overseen.

And, as Christians, we must take seriously the urge to bring that communion to ground level. We are called into a community with our fellows that mirrors our communion with God, mirrored itself in the Godhead's own joyous community of three-in-one. We are called to a community that does not just meet on street corners to cry side-by-side but that meets on a deeper level to cry together. And when that community is broken by death, we are to feel the sting but to rejoice in the knowledge that our circle will be whole once again on the larger side of death.

And despite all evidence, I pray that we may meet Michael there and many more that we thought to be lost. I pray that death, the great divider, may be overturned by bringing us, at last, together.

Harry Potter has readied the ground



Angela Reitsma Bick

According to the *Boston Globe*, the Vatican gives this summer's Harry Potter movie "Two thumbs up." Although this may be a slight exaggeration, since one article does not equal papal decree, it's true that a recent report in the Vatican's newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, had a good review of the *Half-Blood Prince*. This marks such a shift in the official Catholic position on the controversial boy wizard that even the *Times* of London covered it.

Among Christians who have typically objected to Rowling's books, evangelical Protestants have been more prominent than Catholics. Both groups, however, worry that the series will encourage fascination with the occult. Twelve years ago, when the first Potter book came out, many ministry leaders were against the material because of the presence of magic and what some called an "elite occult world" (Ted Baehr, *MovieGuide.org*). Since then, however, especially now that the series is complete, more Christian groups are changing their critical tune. *The Half-Blood Prince* movie collected upright thumbs not only from Rome but from *Christianity Today* and Focus on the Family. This is encouraging because it confirms what other Christians have long seen in Rowling's work: a biblically-based framework.

The magic that makes people so worried is not central to the story at all; it's merely a tool. C. S. Lewis gives the same tool to his characters for exploring Narnia: magic rings to transport them across worlds; a magic horn to summon friends. Rowling elaborates a little more as to how this tool works in her world, but it's a scientific and mechanical elaboration – there's nothing supernatural about it. Lucy, first entering Narnia, encounters magic in the same way you might flick a light switch: without thinking much about it. Rowling's characters go to school to learn how to control and use magic properly; in other words, how to be electricians. Either way, the magic is just a way of telling a story.

If only there were evil people somewhere, insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?

—Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Traces of truth

There are at least two ways that Christian fans read Harry Potter. The first see dramatic parallels between Rowling's world and our own, particularly in the good versus evil battle. Some argue that we – like the "muggles" in Rowling's world who are affected by magic without knowing why – are participants in spiritual warfare even though we can't see all of the action. Connie Neal, author of *What's a Christian to do with Harry Potter?*, has identified dozens of specifically Christian symbols and motifs in Rowling's work. Other Christians are not as convinced that Harry Potter is explicitly religious. They would say that although the books touch on gospel themes like redemption, they shouldn't be scoured for cross imagery. But as the Catholic *Romano* says, the books do show "a clear line of demarcation between good and evil, making clear that good is right, and that in some cases this involves hard work and sacrifices." I see Rowling's overall message as consistent with what Christians believe: there is evil in the world and in every heart. Fighting evil is hard and may require sacrifices. Community helps. And, ultimately, love will triumph over death.

Rowling's gift is her ability to express Christian themes – some might even say The Christian Theme – without banging anyone over the head. Chris Cuthill, a professor at Redeemer, puts it this way: "[C.S.] Lewis once argued that he wrote Narnia to help us slip past the dragons that prevent us from hearing the powerful message of the Gospel anew. In the [last book], Rowling has offered us an invisibility cloak that might help us slip past some more." It's the same answer that Jesus gives the disciples when they wonder at his use of parables. "Why do you tell stories?" they ask him (Matthew 13, *The Message*). "To create readiness," he responds. "To nudge the people toward receptive insight." Harry Potter – on paper or the big screen – has the potential to prepare hearts for the gospel. The series introduces biblical themes that a post-Christian society is no longer familiar with. So after Rowling has so ably illustrated love's power over death in the fight between good and evil, we should – instead of fretting over how the tale is told – be thankful for the "readiness" her story provides.

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News

We just never give up!

Bert Witvoet

A week ago I was having coffee in Vernon, B.C. with a former student of mine, Clare Kooistra (see my interview story on the front page). We talked about a worldview course I used to teach at Toronto District Christian High School. It was a course I had developed myself, partly based on courses I had taken with Professor Evan H. Runner at Calvin College in the late 50s and on Unionville lectures I had attended in the early '60s. It was a course that stressed the belief that "all of life is religion" and that Christians were uniquely equipped to show that cultural formations are never neutral. Clarence said that this course had been a very positive influence in his life. I was grateful to hear that.

A little later during our conversation we talked about the Reformed community in North America. Clare's father, Remkes Kooistra, a well-known minister of the Word in this denomination, belonged to that group of Dutch-trained pastors who had been influential in shaping the Canadian branch of the Christian Reformed Church. It was ministers like his father who had encouraged the development in Canada of Christian higher education and the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee. These pastors believed that Christianity was more than churchianity. Influenced themselves by Abraham Kuyper and other Reformational thinkers in Holland, these leaders had what we referred to as "Kingdom vision." They encouraged a vibrant social consciousness, and refused to be hemmed in by church walls and personalized spirituality. The Kuyperian expression that Christ lays claim to every square inch of life was much in vogue then. But it was more than just jargon that they and others engaged in. This vision produced concrete results in the area of labour, education, politics and mental health.

What about today?

Both Clare and I wondered whether this vision is still alive in Reformed circles today. To what extent have we fallen asleep at the switch?

It was somewhat fitting that the two of us were having our cup of coffee in a place called "The Talking Donkey." The coffee house is run by Christians who are concerned about the plight

of people in third-world countries. The name clearly refers to the story of the prophet Balaam and the donkey who berates Balaam for beating him. There clearly is an angel in front of them wielding a dangerous sword, ready to strike down anyone who disregards the command of the Lord. The donkey had the required vision to see the Angel of the Lord, but Balaam did not see him because he was distracted by his lust for worldly possessions. He lacked Kingdom vision.

It's not that Clare and I were being sentimental and nostalgic about the past. Nor do we want the same answers applied today that were given in the past. Societies have a way of shedding their skins. New challenges face us in the 21st century. But where today is there still that passion of being in the world but not of it?

Renewed courage

I told Clare about changes at the *Christian Courier*. A group of us had almost given up on this magazine when it became obvious that our former editor Harry der Nederlanden would pass away. We seriously faced the question of folding up and putting the paper to rest. Harry had done a marvellous job of challenging the readership to embrace "the vision." But the readership was dwindling, and it seemed that the larger Reformed community had abandoned the flagship, after more than 60 years of spiritual nourishment and cultural critique. It's hard to explain what made us resist the easier way out of ceasing publication and what it was that led us to continue the mission with renewed energy, new editors and new writers. We had consulted a number of people beyond the narrow circle of editorial board members. Some of these people offered substantial donations to be matched by the wider readership to inject some new blood in the paper's veins.

I told Clare that the decision to continue reminded me of a cartoon that Carl Tuyl, a pastor who had spent time in a concentration camp, sent my way some 15 years ago, when I was still the main editor of *CC*. It showed a frog being swallowed by a stork, its head about to descend into the stork's stomach, but its forelegs firmly choking the stork's throat. The caption underneath the drawing read, "Never give up!" Apparently the state of our paper was already in jeopardy at that time. I will never forget that cartoon. What on the surface of things looked rather hopeless for the frog turned out to be, not a stalemate, but the ultimate triumph of amphibian courage over avian complacency.

And so we Christians never give up. We keep on confessing that this world belongs to God. We know in our heart of hearts that there will always be brothers and sisters who have the vision of Balaam's donkey and the courage of the stork's frog. We can be pessimistic about current conditions without losing hope. Hope is that maddening tendency to see life in the midst of death. We never trust the appearance of things, because reality lies much deeper and is much more significant in the long run. We practice amphibian courage over avian complacency because our amphibian Lord, who was equally comfortable on water and on land, can easily defeat the pretentious manoeuvres of high-flying, God-defying culture.



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Thank you to the many donors who participated in the challenge to raise \$5000 before July 31. You put us over the top! Thank you so much. As you know, this \$5000 will be matched dollar-for-dollar by an anonymous donor.

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A 1980s' photo of Stan

We also urge current readers to win new subscribers in order to build *CC*'s support base. Again, thank you to all!

Stan de Jong

Campaign Manager (and former *CC* staffer)

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What do you think?

Our question to our readers this month is "How much time do you spend on email and/or Facebook? Has your life been enriched by either?" Please write one or two paragraphs in which you describe how these electronic forms of communication have influenced your life. We will publish your response in the September 14 issue.

Please send your response or any letter to the editor to Bert Witvoet at the following email address: bert.witvoet@sympatico.ca.

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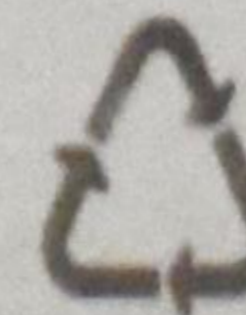
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News

Do Ignatieff's religious roots have modern shoots?

A look at the leader of Canada's Liberal party

Joel van der Veen

OTTAWA — As a child, Michael Ignatieff was mystified by religion. His father, a member of the Russian Orthodox Church, made a point of taking him to Sunday services, and the young Michael observed how his father seemed to change upon entering a house of worship.

"Standing beside him in the church, watching him light his candles, say his prayers and sing in his deep vibrating voice, I always felt that he had slipped away through some invisible door in the air," he recalled years later in *The Russian Album*, a memoir of his father's family.

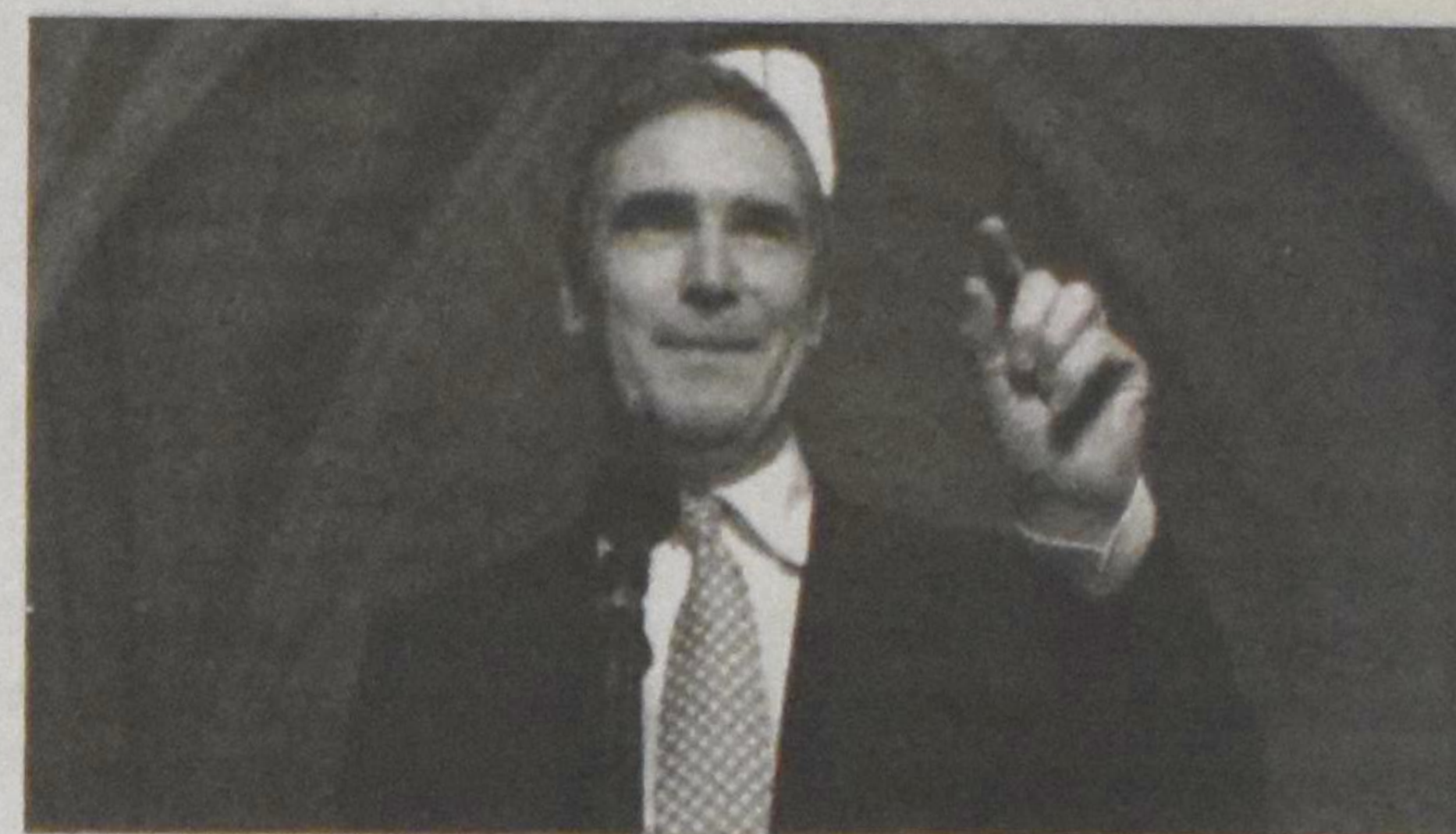
As Ignatieff, a distinguished author, broadcaster and professor, rose to become leader of the federal Liberal party late last year, his background received a great deal of atten-

tion. Much of this came from the Conservative Party, whose advertising questioned Ignatieff's ability to govern a country he had avoided living in for decades.

Of course, voters should be informed about Ignatieff's education and career. But another important facet of his life — his religious views — has received little media coverage. And it's difficult to imagine why, since the church was such a major part of his upbringing.

Thin foundation

His father George, a Russian-Canadian diplomat, described himself in his memoirs as a devout member of the church. "The Orthodox church gave me a sense of belonging, of being in touch with my roots, of safety and stability in an



otherwise confusing world," he wrote in 1985. "I derived great comfort from prayer and from the familiar Orthodox liturgy."

But Michael found the church perplexing, later describing it as "utterly incomprehensible" to him. The rituals and customs confused him. He also noticed how his mother — raised Presbyterian — didn't embrace the Russian church as his father did. "[She] attended the services with a certain rational detachment," he told an interviewer. "It was a wonderful show, but one oughtn't to be taken in by it."

Ignatieff would sometimes attend Presbyterian services with her, noting the contrast between the churches. In his adolescence, he found himself wondering whether or not he was simply adopting his parents' beliefs. "I was an earnest, pious chap and I wanted to believe in God," he said later. "But . . . I had to conclude that I didn't believe."

A major influence for him was British philosopher David Hume, particularly his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. In this work, published posthumously in 1779, Hume argued that humans seek religious consolation to explain the pain of our own nature. "It laid a bomb on the foundations of whatever I believed before," Ignatieff recalled afterward.

Still, he continued to find interest in religion. He was briefly drawn to Quakerism, intrigued by the group's opposition to the Vietnam War. While studying at the University of Toronto in 1967, Ignatieff also co-chaired an International Teach-In, where 19 distinguished guests spoke about "Religion and International Affairs." He earned his Ph.D. at Harvard in 1976.

Pragmatic approach

These days, Ignatieff rarely speaks about his religious views. Michael Valpy, a *Globe and Mail* reporter who interviewed him extensively during the Liberal leadership race, said the politician was "not a churchy guy," although he attends the occasional Orthodox service with his brother. Valpy insisted, though, that Ignatieff has "spiritual sides."

Certainly, the man also has his other sides. He identifies philosopher Isaiah Berlin as a major "secular" hero of his. "Isaiah was not a saint. Yet he led an exemplary life, without religious consolation," Ignatieff said in a 1997 interview. "Humans don't have the answers. A secular life can be as humble as a religious life."

And in a 1984 essay, *The Needs of Strangers*, Ignatieff concluded that religion was a pursuit like any other — a means of finding satisfaction. "Some pursue riches, while others pursue knowledge, power, sex, even danger," he wrote. "Who is to say which is the truer path to human fulfillment?"

So it seems fair to say that Ignatieff views his own faith in the past tense. He is content to discuss religion only occasionally — whether with the press or in his books — and usually from the distant viewpoint of a postmodern atheist. Yet, every so often, he reveals a glimpse of the respect he has for his own religious heritage.

Continued on next page

Food and Obesity II: Sermon topics

"Put a knife to your throat if you are given to gluttony" (Proverbs 23:2). When was the last time you heard a sermon about the evils of overeating? I'm guessing it's been a while. I'm wondering whether our ministers should do more to promote physical health from our pulpits.

It's common in some Christian communities, such as the Old Order Mennonite community I live near, to have elaborate rules dictating much of their daily lives. In the past number of years, we in the Reformed tradition have become increasingly reluctant to suggest to individuals how they should act in specific situations, particularly related to something so "mundane" as eating. Often our reluctance is well grounded: our interventions have been heavy-handed in the past, and most situations are more complicated than they appear on the surface. But have we gone too far giving rights to individuals? Have we left too much to the relationship between individual Christians and their God? What is the level of communal responsibility for our behavior? Should our ministers talk about our diet choices in their sermons?

We could ask similar questions about our government: how far should our government go to regulate our health and promote healthy behaviors? Christians have long been concerned about the role and responsibilities of government, from before the time Jesus was asked if we should pay taxes to Caesar. As governments pass laws and generally work to promote our health, they become more directly involved in our lives. Perhaps what was once controlled by "natural" phenomena, such as eating controlled by famines, now needs laws and government-mandated restriction for our lives.

Past actions

A quick scan of medical journals demonstrates that doctors and researchers are asking how public policy can and should be used to regulate health issues. One such policy was the decision in Canada to levy "sin taxes" on alcohol and tobacco. One reason for these taxes is to warn against the potentially unhealthy consequences of consuming these substances. Another reason is that because health care is a public expense in Canada, the health costs of cigarette and excessive alcohol use should be borne, at least partially, by those who smoke and drink. When it was discovered that trans-fat may have negative health consequences, no one objected to regulations that, for our protection, would control the use of trans-fat.

What is new about the current discussion about man-

dating public policy is that it is intruding into areas that at least initially seem far removed from typical health concerns. California passed and New York City is considering a law requiring chain restaurants to post calorie information about their food items on their menu boards and printed menus so that patrons could choose their meals in an informed manner. This is based on research finding that most people are unable to choose the "healthiest" item from normal restaurant menus.

Too much sugar

The item of this nature that has garnered the most attention is a suggestion that a tax be levied on sugared beverages like soft drinks. In the States (I don't have Canadian figures), people in 1977-78 consumed a daily average of 70 calories a day from sweetened drinks; that average has increased to 190 calories in 1999-00. These beverages now account for 10-15 per cent of the calories children consume, and it has been suggested that these drinks are one important cause of the increasing rates of obesity and the consequent health problems. A tax on these drinks might then be helpful. The beverage industry has obviously objected to such a tax, but many other groups believe that it could have useful health consequences.

This tax could be used to drive a reduction in soft-drink consumption (just like a cigarette tax has resulted in reduced smoking) or to promote health. The funds could be used to advertise about health issues for children and parents, set up an exercise program, cover the cost of health care, or even reduce the cost of healthy natural foods.

As the government becomes more and more involved in regulating the cost of food and the use of certain substances, I wonder whether Christians, too, should pay closer attention to the physical aspects of life. If drinking fewer sugared drinks is healthy for us, should we promote this in our community, and should it happen from the pulpit? At the very least, as scientific knowledge progresses about food and its effects, Christians should be part of this research and actively involved in public discussions about these matters.

Rudy Eikelboom (reikelboom@wlu.ca) is a professor of psychology at Wilfrid Laurier University who does not want you to know how many cases of soft drinks he buys weekly for his household.



From the Lab

Rudy Eikelboom

News

Hymns become latest revolt trigger in Fiji

Kim Cain

MELBOURNE, Australia (ENI) – Charles Wesley, the great Methodist hymn writer, may have penned his famous words “O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer’s praise” almost 270 years ago, but it seems just singing these words today in strife-torn Fiji could destabilise a whole government. The military government of interim prime minister Commodore Frank Bainimarama has agitated the normally harmonious voice of Fijian Methodists by attempting to stop the church’s conference from taking place in late August.

A Fiji court order on 23 July silenced two top Methodist Church ministers and paramount chief, Ro Teimumu Kepa. They were charged with defying the Public Emergency Regulation over the church’s annual conference which they had planned.

Ro Teimumu, along with the church’s president, the Rev. Ame Tugae, and its secretary general, the Rev. Tuikilakila Waqairatu, were granted bail after being held in custody for two days, and ordered to appear in court in three weeks. They had to surrender all their travel documents and are banned from having any meetings for 21 days, and are not allowed to be seen in public or to conduct anything that might be construed to be a meeting.

It is believed to be the first time a Fijian government has clashed so openly with the Methodist church, which many residents say has a reputation for moderation, conservative social values and harmony. About one third of Fiji’s almost one million people are Methodists.

In the days leading up to the conference it is normal for up to 10,000 singing Fijians to gather together for the nation’s biggest social gathering: the Fijian choir hymn singing contest. Fiji is as renowned for its choir singing as for its electrifying brand of rugby football.



Members of the Methodist church in Fiji are determined to hold government-banned conference.

Now church members say the government has also banned the choral feast, fearing it will lead to further political instability. But in a show of religious conviction and support for their church leaders that may have political reverberations for the fragile hold on power by Bainimarama, it is rumoured that many more choirs will make their way to Suva to sing their hymns of God’s power and might.

At this stage, the church is determined to hold its annual conference, which usually brings together up to 1000 church leaders for a week of discussion, celebration and singing. It is the supreme decision-making body for the Methodist church.



Ignatieff continued from p. 6

In an interview with British journalist Frances Welch, he described a visit to a Ukrainian church established by his great-grandfather. There, the believers sang a “panikhida” in honour of his ancestors, who departed 80 years prior. “They had preserved the graves as an attitude of respect because they were believers,” Ignatieff said. “You would have needed a heart of stone not to have been touched.”

Joel van der Veen was born

and raised in Peterborough, Ontario. He is presently studying journalism at Ryerson University in Toronto.



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New deadstock laws make liars of farmers

Farmers say changes to Ontario’s deadstock disposal are going to make liars out of them. “There’s more paperwork involved with a dead calf than a live one,” quipped a farmer at a CFFO meeting this past winter on the new disposal regulations.

The record keeping of deadstock has some farmers shaking their heads. When a farm animal dies, a record of disposal must be made. Under the new NMA regulation the record needs to include the species and age of the animal, the animal’s weight, time and date of death if known, cause of death, time and date of disposal, method of disposal, place of disposal, date of disposal. For incineration a record of temperature. For composting a record of all regulated compost applied to the land in the year.

It’s overkill! Too extreme! As a result, there are going to be fewer “recorded deaths.” Can you see some of the causes of death that will be written down? Natural causes, heart failure, old age, veterinarian not sure, and so on.

Most farmers don’t know the exact age of their cattle, especially the cows. If a farmer has 50 or 100 cows he’s not expected to know the age of them all. He’ll have an idea. How will he know how much the animal weighs? Buy a set of farm scales? Truck the dead animal to a place where it can be weighed? Sure, but a permit under the federal Health of Animals Act is needed. Guessing the weight of an animal would make it easier for farmers and make a lot more sense.

The changes came into effect on March 27, 2009. The former Dead Animal Disposal Act was repealed and replaced with two regulations.

The first regulates on-farm dead animal disposal under the Nutrient Management Act (NMA). The second regulates the management of deadstock on properties other than the farm under the Food Safety and Quality Act (FSQA).

The new on-farm regulations under NMA expands the list of disposal options, includes farmed animals not previously covered, and establishes enhanced environmental standards for protection of water sources, with addition requirements that safeguard animal health and public health protection.

This regulation applies to all livestock operations, regardless of whether or not they are required to have a nutrient management plan or strategy.

The new regulations now include the following farm animals: alpacas, bison, cattle, deer, elk, goats, llamas, sheep, yaks, pigs and other porcine animals, chickens, turkeys, geese, ducks, guinea fowl, quails, pigeon, pheasants, partridges, ratites, horses, ponies, donkeys, rabbits, other than rabbits kept for pets, and fur-bearing animals.

Formerly there were three basic options for deadstock disposal including collection, composting or burial. The new list includes collector service, composting, incineration, disposal vessel burial, delivery to an approved anaerobic digester, delivery to an approved waste disposal site, delivery to a licensed disposal facility under Food Safety and Quality Act and delivery to a veterinarian for post mortem and disposal by the veterinarian.

Incineration might sound like a great idea to get rid of the little calf that died suddenly. Forget it! The outdoor wood furnace doesn’t qualify. The outdoor wood furnace, which heats homes, garages, workshops and even greenhouses, has gained popularity in recent years.

The regulations state that an incinerator must have been issued a Verification Certificate by ETV Canada certifying that it has a secondary chamber that can maintain the temperatures of the gases entering it for at least one second at 1000 degree C or two seconds at 850 degree C. A record of temperatures in the combustion chambers throughout the incineration process must be kept for a period of two years.

What really irks farmers is that it’s okay for wildlife and roadkill to decompose in the bush or by the roadside, but farmers have to know the weight, age and cause of death of the animal they are disposing.

And record it!

Maynard van der Galien of Renfrew, Ont. is downsizing his beef herd.



Church

Argentina: Secularism 'an icy position,' says church leader



San Rafael Cathedral

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (CNA) – A Roman Catholic leader in San Rafael warned fellow Argentinians recently that the Christians roots that have forged their national identity are in jeopardy because of secularism. Bishop Eduardo Taussig called secularism “an icy ideological position” that considers the exclusion of any reference to God from the public square to be a good.

Speaking at a public *Te Deum* service at his cathedral at which government officials were present, Taussig said that while secularism is being promoted by a small minority, it is nonetheless very harmful to everyone, as it is an ideology that seeks “to reduce man’s religious dimension to merely the realm of conscience or, in any case to the interior of churches.” Taussig said secularism acts by disdaining

religious rites and ceremonies at significant moments in social and political life, as well as through campaigns “to exclude religious symbols from public buildings.”

He also noted that secularism in the schools “has enormous consequences.” In particular, he lamented that fact that what students are taught about Argentinean culture has been unhinged from its religious roots and traditions, “which have been defended and upheld” by many of the country’s liberators and forebears. Nevertheless, the bishop expressed his satisfaction that some government officials did take part in the *Te Deum* celebration “despite the cold of winter and the threat of the flu ... in order to nourish our faith, as we have since our beginnings, with the Word of God.”

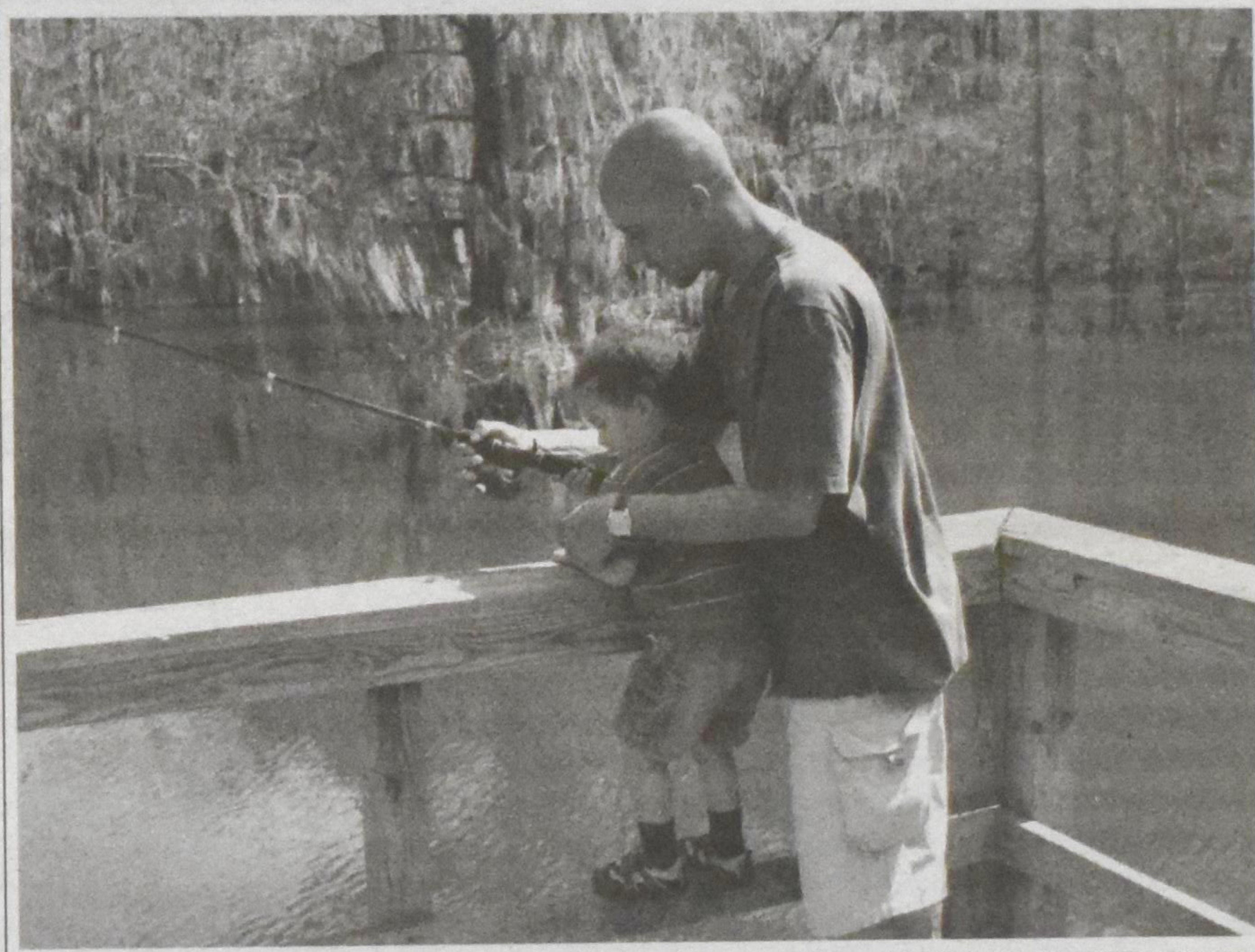
Brazilian bishop: Parents fulfill mission when passing faith to children

SAO PAULO, Brazil, (CNA) – The president of the Brazilian Catholic bishop’s Committee on Life and the Family said recently, “When a family passes on religious principles, the Gospel, to their own children, it is fulfilling its mission as the domestic church.”

Archbishop Orlando Brandes’s comments were part of the presentation of the 2009 edition of a book, *The Time of the Family*, which will be released to mark the Week of the Family, a Brazilian initiative that will take place in August. This year’s celebration will focus on catechesis (teaching the fundamentals of Christian faith), as “parents are the first catechists” of their children, the archbishop said.

“At the heart of the family, founded upon marriage, is its vocation to be a natural source of life in which diverse generations learn and exercise each day the joy and virtue of living, not only individually but also together in ... forgiveness, sacrifice, patience and everyday life, joy and sorrow,” the archbishop said.

Amid the various threats facing the family today, Brandes said, the family must keep sight of “its fundamental mission, which is to be ‘the first school of human and social virtues’ that contribute what is essential for living together in peace.”



Scotland: Canadian artist's show defaces Bible, causes outrage

Marian Van Til

LONDON – *The Times* of London reported last month that a publicly funded exhibit in Glasgow, Scotland is “encouraging people to deface the Bible in the name of art – and visitors have responded with abuse and obscenity.”

The exhibit, ironically called *Made in God's Image*, is appearing at Glasgow’s Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA) until August 22. The Bible is a “central part” of the show, accompanied by a container of pens and a notice saying, “If you feel you have been excluded from the Bible, please write your way back into it.”

In association with organizations representing gay Christians and Muslims, the exhibit was created by artists Anthony Schrag and David Malone. Malone is the gallery’s artist in residence and a Canadian who took a master’s degree at the Glasgow School of Art. The exhibit was originally proposed by the Metropolitan Community Church, which insists that “the idea was to reclaim the Bible as a sacred text.”

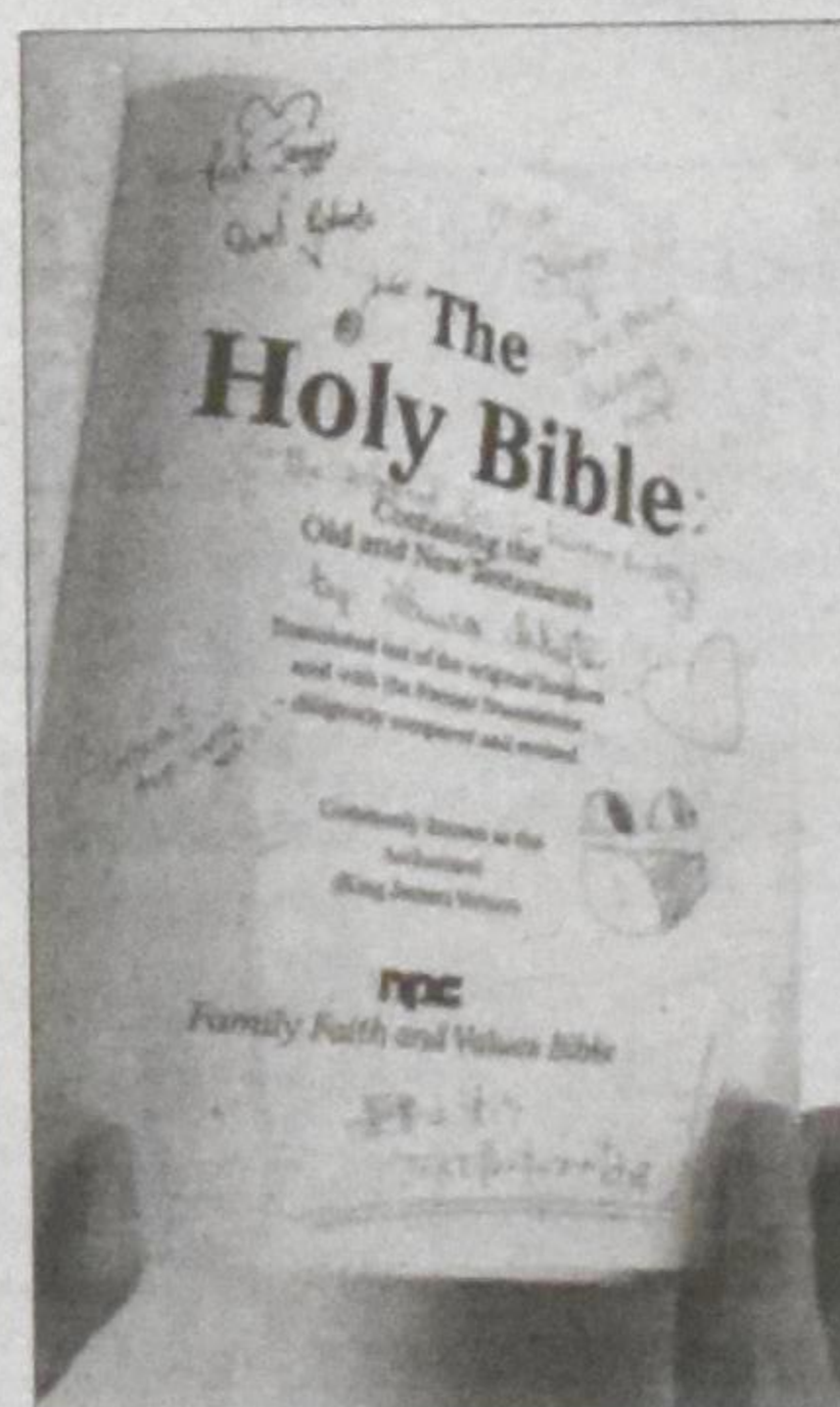
The Community Church describes itself as “celebrating racial, cultural, linguistic, sexual, gender and theological diversity.” The church made the suggestion to include the container of pens to make the Bible “interactive.”

A video that forms a second element in the exhibition shows a young woman ripping pages out of the Bible and stuffing them in her panties and bra, and in her mouth. The film showed “the word as power,” Schrag said. “Roxanne gave a performance where she ate a Bible and it became part of her.”

Symbol of brokenness, lawlessness

Malone, who admits he’s an atheist, was not perturbed by the appalled reaction of Christians to written comments such as, “This is all sexist pish, so disregard it all.” Or (written on the opening of Genesis), “I am Bi[sexual], Female & Proud. I want no god who is disappointed in this.”

“Human rights” are at the centre of the show, Malone insisted. “It was an open gesture. Are those who say they are upset



allows us to discuss difficult things, and GOMA allows difficult discussions to take place – that is why Glasgow is at the cutting edge of contemporary art.”

While the exhibition’s supporters say the exhibit promotes “inclusivity” and should break down barriers between orthodox religion and gay and transgendered people, most people who wrote nasty comments on

the Bible were not concerned with sexuality. One writer altered the first line of Genesis to “In the beginning, God (me) I created religion.” Another wrote, “The Gospel According to Luke Skywalker.” The main sentiment, however, is rage at Christianity.

Several weeks into the show its producers indicated that “the most offensive pages would be removed, but Christians have expressed outrage and disbelief that the show has been staged at all,” reported *The Times*. The Church of Scotland condemned the exhibit as sacrilege and a Roman Catholic spokesperson called it “infantile,” adding, “One wonders whether the organizers would have been quite as willing to have the Koran defaced.”

Christian lawyer and head of the Christian Legal Centre Andrea Minichiello said, “This is symbolic of the state of our broken and lawless society. We have got to a point where we call the desecration of the Bible modern art. The Bible stands for everything this art does not: for creation, beauty, hope and regeneration.”

While the exhibition’s supporters say the exhibit promotes “inclusivity” and should break down barriers between orthodox religion and gay and transgendered people, most people who wrote nasty comments on

Church

CRC campus minister hired at Ontario's Fanshawe College

LONDON, Ont. (CRCNA) – Several years ago while Kelly Sibthorpe was working as a youth pastor, he realized that youth who struggle for identity need to identify with Christ. “In order to avoid the pitfalls of falling away from Christian roots, this identity must be carefully nurtured and maintained,” Sibthorpe says. “The personal knowledge and nurture of Christian identity contribute to peace and an enduring commitment to the Kingdom of God.”



With that realization in mind, Sibthorpe is set to begin his new job as campus minister at Fanshawe College in London, Ontario, this fall. Sibthorpe and his wife, Rev. Willemina Zwart, will be working together to enable students to connect with Christ and the local Christian Reformed community in London.

In advance of the fall semester, Sibthorpe's wife has been working with students as part of “Common Ground,” an outreach program sponsored by the University of Western Ontario and Fanshawe College. The program, says Sibthorpe, facilitates Christian student connections and relational development in a “home away from home” atmosphere. Students meet with Zwart in the couple's home.

Developing Reformed worldview

“Providing opportunities for Fanshawe students to be cared for spiritually while developing a Reformed

worldview is my ministry goal as campus minister,” says Sibthorpe. “Creating safe places to talk, common community, worship, study of God's Word, and facilitating connections to the local CRC community are necessary functions of the campus minister to empower students to transition successfully from the college experience through to adult Christian living.”

For the past six years Sibthorpe has worked in pastoral care in Stratford, Ontario. He says that experience sharpened his use and understanding of foundational pastoral traits such as empathy and compassion.

“Deep listening and dialogue without offering advice too quickly are key in building relationships of trust that help people move toward personal growth and healing. Prayer follows naturally into this kind of ministry relationship and prayer means care,” he says.

Bible society becomes ‘Biblica’

Marian Van Til

LONDON – For 200 years the International Bible Society (IBS) has been sharing God's Word around the world. Through two centuries of ministry, IBS has provided Scriptures to soldiers on battlefields, inmates in prisons, immigrants, the poor, and anyone who needs the hope of the Bible.

For 50 years Send the Light (STL), a British organization, has been taking Christian literature to the farthest reaches of the world so that people everywhere could encounter Jesus Christ through the gospel message.

In 2007 IBS and STL merged and moved its headquarters to London. The merger was undertaken “to take the Bible and biblical resources to new places, in more languages, in ways never before envisioned,” says the society.

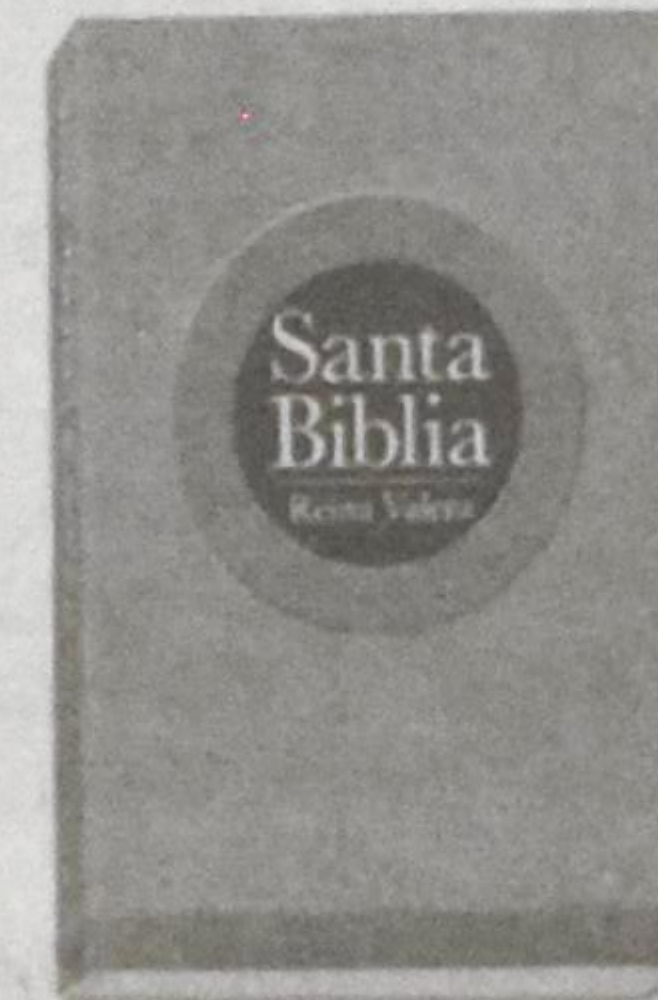
IBS-STL are now moving into a third century of ministry as Biblica. This is much more than a simple name change, the society says. “Biblica is driven to reach those who have never experienced the transformational power of God's Word in ways that uniquely meet their personal needs.”

The society says it is motivated “by 200 years of passion and commitment to the provision of God's Word, but with a fresh vision to reach the world with the Bible and resources that bring people into deeper relationship with God.”

Bible translation is key

Bible translation has been a key component of the society's mission since 1810, a year after its founding. Considered a leader in methods and quality of translating the Scriptures, Biblica strives to provide translations that are “accurate, natural, and clear.” This year, co-ordinated through Biblica's 45 ministry centres, indigenous translators are working on 34 projects to produce the Bible in 29 languages. For each project, Biblica says, the goal is to provide a text that “represents the customary usage of the native language to the targeted audience, makes sense and is clearly understandable, and meticulously maintains the meaning of the original Scriptures.”

Why is that so important? “Giving God's Word to people is like handing out bars of gold,” says Biblica's website.



“When we provide Scriptures to people in their ‘heart’ language, the results are powerful and life-changing.”

Biblica also produces materials and has programs for addiction outreach, reaching children for Christ, prison ministry, a crisis and disaster fund and a “CityReachers” project. CityReachers is a North American outreach to distribute specialized

Bibles through city newspapers and door-to-door. Biblica describes it as “individuals, churches, and businesses com[ing] together in their passion to give God's Word to neighbors, friends, and associates.”

On its cover, a New Testament or Scripture portion features landmarks of the particular city in which Biblica is working. An insert includes historical facts and testimonies from local citizens who have had their lives impacted from reading God's Word.

Conservative Anglicans ‘have sacrificed to follow Jesus’

Marian Van Til, with files from Christian Post

BEDFORD, Texas – The Anglican Church in North America was officially constituted in June, marking a new beginning for thousands of conservative Anglicans eager to get past the politics of church and on with promoting the Gospel.

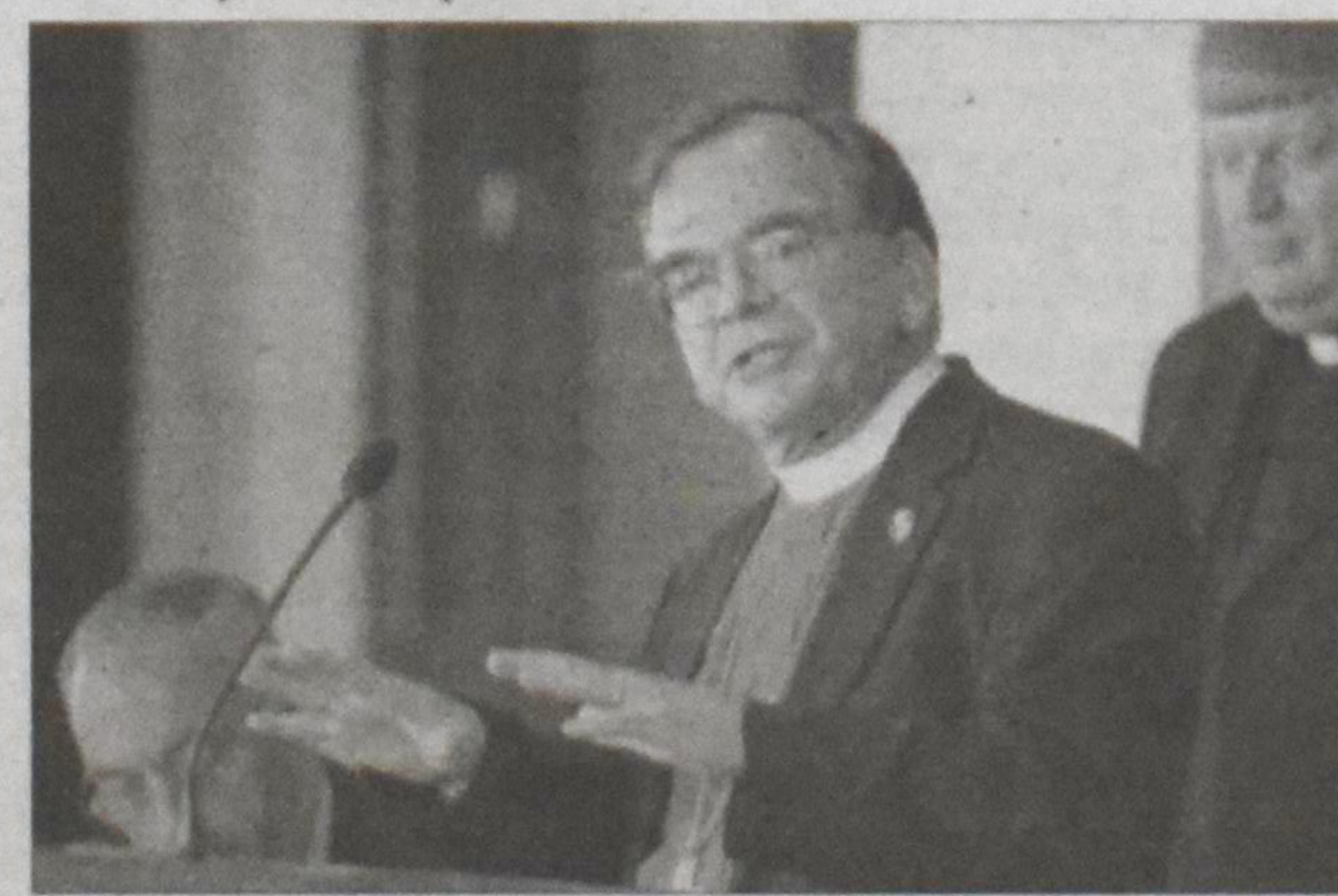
The move came barely a month before The Episcopal Church isolated itself from the rest of the Anglican Communion by refusing, at its triennial general convention in mid-July, to maintain the moratorium on ordaining active homosexuals requested by the Communion's head, the Archbishop of Canterbury, three years ago.

“Many of us have sacrificed a great deal to follow Jesus to this place. Many of us have lost properties and sacred treasures and incomes and pensions and standing and friends,” said the Rt. Rev. Robert Duncan, who will be the first archbishop of the ACNA. Yet “there is no one here who would go back,” he said in his opening address to the hundreds who convened in for the inaugural assembly.

They, along with a host of orthodox Anglicans overseas, have been calling on The Episcopal Church to repent and get back in line with Scripture and traditional Anglicanism, particularly since it consecrated an openly gay bishop in 2003. But the conservatives saw little hope that the U.S. church body would change direction, and the Episcopal Church's recent vote to accept gay ordination without

caveats proved them right.

Theological conservatives announced last year their intention to form a new “province” that some see as a rival body to The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada. The ACNA unites 700 Episcopal and Canadian Anglican parishes representing 100,000 conservative Anglicans into a single church that is meant to serve as a biblically orthodox, Anglican, mission-minded, and biblically-centred province.



The Most Rev. Robert Duncan, archbishop of the Anglican Church in North America, is seen here at a press conference during the ACNA inaugural assembly on June 24, 2009.

Duncan told fellow ACNA members that there is a great Reformation of the Christian church underway. “We North-American Anglicans are very much in the midst of it,” he said. “While much of mainline Protestantism is finding itself adrift from its moorings (submission to the Word of God), just like Western Anglicanism, there is an ever-growing stream of North American Protestantism that has re-embraced Scripture's authority (just as we have).”

Engaging culture with the Gospel

Now under one unified banner, the conservative Anglicans are hoping to recommit to engaging the culture with the Gospel and not waste any more time. “We are here, above all, to proclaim to the world what our God has done among us, among us sinners,” Duncan stressed to assembly attendees. “The work is before us. The main thing is keeping the main thing. And the main thing is the mission of Jesus Christ.”

Anglican leaders from the Global South have already stated their intention to formally recognize the ACNA and affirm full communion with it. Recognition from the rest of the global Anglican Communion, including its top official, the Archbishop of Canterbury, however, may take years.

Meanwhile, Katherine Jefferts Schori, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, told her church's general convention that it is “heresy” to say that individuals need to be saved by Jesus Christ.

Profiles

Teaching and being taught in Yabus

Tim Krell

Four days after leaving home and seven flights later, the small prop-plane bounced down on the dirt airstrip cut into the landscape of Yabus, Sudan. The door pushed up into the hot, morning air. My friend, Phalice, the director of the newly opened Sudan Interior Church Secondary School, greeted me with a hug and a smile. After returning two fifty gallon drums of aviation fuel to the protection of the Sudan People's Liberation Army, SPLA, we lurched along the rutty, dirt road past the village of Yabus to the SIM (Serving In Mission) compound.

For the next fifteen days I would work at the secondary school as a mentor and trainer for the small cadre of teachers. The first day my body worked through nausea and a headache to adjust to the extreme heat. There was little I could do to really cool off. The lukewarm, filtered water provided barely enough refreshment to energize me for the day's tasks.

My first encounter with the people who made Yabus their home was that first afternoon. On a short tour of the school grounds, Deborah and a group of children surprised Phalice and me. Deborah, a wife of one of the secondary teachers, had arrived in January at the beginning of the first term of school. She was restless to teach, so in the afternoon she gathered the local school-aged children into an unused classroom to teach them to read. At the moment I did not realize that Deborah's demonstration of compassion and mercy would serve as the template for my encounters with all the teachers throughout my visit.

'I can'

During the next few days I visited classes, attended the teacher prayer time before school and listened to teachers' conversations to get a feel of the school culture. The secondary school enrolled adults, twenty to forty year-olds, who had received an elementary education while living in refugee camps in neighbouring countries during the Sudan civil war. I



Phalice and the class that I taught for teacher training

quickly discovered that the system of teaching was primarily to read, copy and memorize. I worried about the teacher training I was to do Thursday afternoon. My current thinking about teaching and learning seemed somewhat distant from the practice I observed. I was challenged even further when Canberra, the "Christian Religious Education" teacher and a missionary from northern India, asked me to teach her class. The class was currently studying the Minor Prophets, so I was given the task of teaching from Jonah, Micah, Nahum and Habakkuk. This only increased my anxiety as I wondered how I could model a more interactive approach to learning.

By Wednesday afternoon, after several conversations with Phalice, I settled on lesson design as the focus of the next afternoon's training. During classroom observations, I wondered if teachers had a succinct idea of what they wanted students to know or be able to do at the end of the day's lesson. So during Thursday's training, I emphasized developing clear learning targets. I wanted teachers to be able to write clear "I can" statements for students. So that morning, I began to teach my first Bible class by writing "I can tell others the story about Jonah" across the top of the black board. The opportunity to teach Bible challenged me to put my teacher training ideals into practice.

God's word to all peoples

I learned much about the Sudanese people through my study of the Minor Prophets. Although I had learned about Jonah and the great fish in Sunday school and had memorized Micah 6:8 as one of God's summarizing statements for Christian living, I learned for the first time how the lives of God's chosen people and the lives of Sudanese Christians mirror one another. Corrupt and greedy leaders have oppressed both races. Both were displaced from their

homeland by the horror of war. Women and children were raped and slaughtered. In Sudan, between 1956 and 2005, the people fled for their lives to live in the bush and in neighbouring countries. They lived in crowded refugee camps as orphans and widows. Now, only in the last few years are they returning. Here is just one example of a parallel circumstance from Micah 7 (The additions in parentheses are added to

emphasize the Sudanese Christians' reason for the hope and joy they have in the midst of adversity.):

11-13 *Oh, that will be a day! A day for rebuilding your city (or the country of Sudan), a day for stretching your arms, spreading your wings!*

All your dispersed and scattered people will come back (just as in southern Sudan), old friends and family from faraway places, From Assyria (Ethiopia) in the east to Egypt in the west, (or Kenya in the south) from across the seas (or the great Nile River) and out of the mountains.

But there'll be a reversal for everyone else

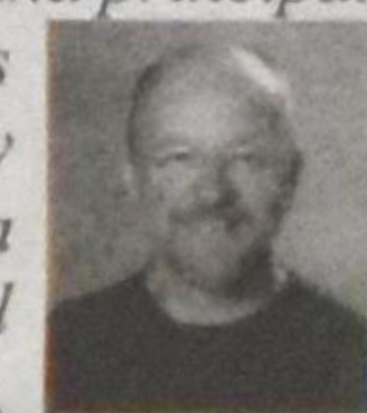
— massive depopulation — because of the way they lived, the things they did.

(The Message version)

Tired ears and feet

The Sudanese people hunger and thirst for peace. During prayer one morning one of teachers, Anter, prayed, "Our ears are tired of hearing gun shots and our feet are tired of running to safety." Yet, just as Micah and Habakkuk proclaimed hope and peace in the Lord, the Dinka, Mabaan and Uduk Christians in Sudan live with that same hope on a daily basis. The country is teetering on the precipice of conflict. Even now leaders are making decrees and hidden decisions that scatter people from their homes in Darfu, and death and destruction are still the norm there. Pray with me for peace in Africa, and pray that the secondary school in Yabus will provide Christian leadership for the next generation in the Sudan so that the day for rebuilding their country will be realized.

Tim Krell has been a teacher and principal in junior and senior high schools for thirty years; he currently works part-time for Alta Vista, a Christian educational service organization in Seattle,



Washington.

Kathy Nimmer, dog's best friend

interviewed by

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

(This second half of last issue's interview between CC and Kathy Nimmer was accidentally omitted. We present it here in its entirety with our apologies.— ed.)

How are you promoting the project and collecting the stories necessary for its success?

The project is centered around my web site, <http://www.servicedogstories.com>. There, people can learn about the project, study the requirements for participation, read sample writings and submit their materials for consideration. People can also write to me at kathy@servicedogstories.com or at PO Box 3075, West Lafayette, IN 47996, USA.

Even non-writers can take part, as I have an interview option where I will talk to individuals on the phone and write something for them with their approval. Therefore, I'll be both writer and editor for this project that will ultimately feature submissions from many people all around the world plus pieces I have written. I'm also working heavily on promotions via e-mail, mailings to more than two hundred service dog schools, press releases to media outlets, participation in disability conventions, and brochures available in print, large print, and braille.

Is anyone assisting you in bringing the book to fruition?

I have a terrific assistant, Katie Robinson. She is a former student and a superb English teacher herself. She assisted me three years ago when I wrote a book of poetry about my vision loss and is back onboard again for this project. Friends at Guiding Eyes for the Blind in Yorktown Heights, New York, are helping as well; that is where I received my current guide dog. My web designer created an attractive and accessible site. Friends and family nearby assist with logistical matters, such as mailings and paperwork.

Have you found a publisher yet?

Since I am seeking mass market commercial publishing, I am working to attain a literary agent who will help me land a publishing contract. I'm currently preparing the



Anter, Garang, and Stephen are three teachers from the secondary school. The two on the left are Sudanese coming back from Kenya to help their country. Stephen is a missionary from Ethiopia.

Memoir



Bienke's story (Part IV)

This is part four of the life of Jacobina Wilhelmina Radsma, née Vlaar, as told to her daughter Marion. The series will continue in following issues.

I was 17 years old when the second World War broke out. Early morning on May tenth we were abruptly awakened when heavy airplanes started overflying our village by tens and hundreds. Everybody ran into the streets in nightclothes and robes. Then people who had heard the early morning news told us what was going on – war had been declared. Every household had one or two radios; I don't think televisions were even invented yet. I am more than 75 years old now but I can still remember it so clearly, what happened that early May morning. The sun was just coming up, a brilliant blaze of orange and gold promising us a beautiful day – in nature, that is. We did not know what was in store for us in the coming five years. So many times we were terrified by events. So many people, people I knew or knew of, were killed – some by bombs, some by unprovoked execution-style shootings. So many times we lay wakeful at night while airplanes droned loudly overhead. Worse than the noise was the fear, fear that a plane might be shot down above us, might even land on the roof over our heads. So we would stare sleeplessly into the dark until silence would finally mark the end of that night's terror.

Food became very scarce, not so much in the first year, but as time and the war wore on, it slowly became worse. In the fourth and fifth years food shortages became very serious, especially for people in the cities and those who were living in apartment buildings where there was no room for personal gardens. Streams of people trudged down to our villages for food and for a night's shelter so that they could go on the next day. Some had walked for days, sore-footed, tired and underfed. All thanks to the Germans, Hitler and his bedeviled helpers. It was bad, particularly that last winter which came to be known as the Hunger Winter.

We were very fortunate that there was always enough food – it was not always very tasty, but we did not go hungry. That time there were still five children – I should say teenagers – living at home. My other brothers and sisters were married and had their own families. Again, as the war years wore on, we had to be off the streets earlier and earlier. At first the Germans imposed an 8 p.m. curfew. They raised it to 7 p.m. Then it became 6 p.m. And you had better stay inside because if you had not a valid reason to be out and did not have an authorization – from the Germans – to say you could, they could shoot you right there and then. We had heavy drapes in front of the windows, but that was not enough; everybody had to have at night black paper stuck to the windows, no shimmer of light was allowed

to peek through. Of course, this was so that the Allied airplanes could not see our villages to destroy the German invaders.

However, there still were lots of highlights of fun and family life even among the many hardships caused by the war. My sister and I each had a boyfriend (in my case, Adam) and one of my brothers had a girlfriend. The oldest and youngest of my siblings still living at home were dating. A couple of times in the week, our steadies

would come over right after work, have supper with us and then stay the night, so we needed lots of extra sleeping space. The next morning we all went back to work.

During the last year, a family of three, parents with a son, lived with us. Their other two sons lived with neighbours. They had come from Vlaardingen, a small city near Rotterdam, Zuid Holland. They were complete strangers to us in the beginning but we got to know them well over the months they lived with us. With that family and our own, as well as the friends we welcomed for sleep-overs every week our house was already full. But in addition people, sometimes four or five of them, knocked on our door every evening to ask for food and shelter – people whom we could not turn away! So we always had lots of people sitting around the supper table.

I never heard my mother complain once. And she had a lot of people to take care of. She took everything in her stride, an amazing woman and the best mother of all mothers. Her age at that time was about 66 years. She died when she was 75 years old of cancer of the liver. I still miss her. I still think of her with a strong admiration as well as a deep and abiding affection.

We were always afraid during those years, sometimes terrified. It was a fear that affected – and infected – every activity, every moment of rest. One time, for example, we were awakened in the middle of the night by heavy knocking on the back door. Three German soldiers were standing there demanding entrance to the house. My father, who knew some German, wanted to talk to them first. But they pushed him aside and walked right past him with their big boots, stomping heavily up the stairs to the bedroom where my brothers were sleeping. We were very fortunate that night. They wanted boys to work for them in the German factories but my two older brothers were too old and my younger brother was too young. My sister and I were the right age, but we were “only girls” and they had no use for us. Sometimes it pays off to be a girl!

We often suffered raids; one of these raids happened on a Sunday morning dur-



ing a church service. At the time of this particular raid, the Germans were not allowed to enter the church to disrupt the service. Not yet. Later they could and did. The minister was well into preaching his sermon when someone hurried quietly up to the pulpit and spoke briefly in his ear. Our minister stopped in the middle of his sentence, looked at the parishioners filling the pews and urgently commanded, “Congregation, let us all stand up and sing some

hymns. Let us do it now and I mean now.” We all stood up right away while questions and answers were whispered quickly from pew to pew. Singing loudly, we watched all the young men between 16 and 25 walking in a silent stream up to the pulpit. Behind the pulpit they entered a secret door, climbed up a small stair case and then took refuge in the hiding place behind our big pipe organ. When the door shut seamlessly behind the last young man, we listened to the rest of the sermon, although I must admit our attention was a little scattered. When the service ended, we found three or four German soldiers stationed at every exit, examining the exiting worshippers for Dutch youths to conscript. Their army trucks were parked on the road in front of the church. That day they did not catch one boy. I wonder what the soldiers thought as we all filed out, trying to look casual, not a single young man among us?

Another time all the boys who were hiding in Andijk somehow got a message that there would be a raid. When dusk arrived, they all climbed into the schuiten and punts owned by the local farmers and poled their way into the fields. They were well ahead of the Germans and knew the way – which the Germans, of course, did not. The Germans followed but got lost in the maze of waterways. On top of that, after only a couple of minutes of pursuit, they were enveloped by a heavy fog that suddenly descended over the whole area. I have never before or since seen a fog that dropped so quickly or densely. Strangely enough, it fell much more deeply over the fields than around the village houses. The Germans were into it for only five minutes before they were forced to turn back, unable to locate a single one of their fleeing quarry. And yet, when the boys had started out there was only the merest hint of fog in the air. We marveled at the miracle that God had sent down on us, one of so many he sent to protect and help us. We prayed to our heavenly Father and he heard us. Lots of heartfelt *thank you's* rose to heaven from Andijk afterwards!

To be continued in following issues.

book proposal that will secure an agent, so I'm still at the front end of that process. I am confident, however, that publishers will be interested in the book since the public has a fascination with all things tied to dogs. Additionally, since inspirational anthologies such as the *Chicken Soup* series have found such incredible success, I'm eager to offer a book with a similar style, but with the unique content of service dogs as the focus.

How has your faith in God sustained you as you've overcome the challenges of being blind?

I can't imagine living with blindness without faith. It isn't always easy now, but it would be dreadful without trust that God is working through my limitations. A friend once told me that the blind are lucky because the first thing they'll see is God. I long for that day, but I also want to live each day on this earth to the fullest.

It hasn't always been easy. I became anorexic in high school when my vision was slipping. Each stage of loss was horrendous, like the morning in college when I woke to only cloudiness and no edges anymore. The early years of teaching were a challenge that shredded my soul at times. But I still believe that I have been equipped to fulfill a role for which I'm uniquely suited. I don't judge my students for their looks, so my classroom is a place of acceptance. I am not distracted by visual things, so I can listen to people's voices more and discern what they are really feeling.

Every step I take, I'm not sure that there is a piece of floor in front of me or that there isn't something that will hurt or embarrass me, so trust is paramount. Maybe that is why I see so much meaning in my partnership with a guide dog – together we are so much more than we are separately, and that is similar to my walk with the Lord.

Mother Teresa said that discouragement is a form of pride, leaning on self instead of God. I still get discouraged. Though I've achieved a plethora of awards and honours, I still can be ignored by colleagues or treated as inferior. But I try to keep discouragement to a minimum since I want to be in God's will. I may ask him in heaven why it was my lot to be blind on this earth, or else I won't care anymore. For now, I choose to believe in the mountains, even if I can't see them.

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema is a freelance writer living in St. Catharines, ON.

Columns

From Toddlers to Teens

by Denise Dykstra



My little crash course on race

A couple of months ago I wrote a column about positive adoption language. It was very well received – thank you for your encouraging comments! – but my writing wasn't complete. I didn't touch on race, which is often an important component of adoption. Many people who adopt choose kids with physical features different from their own.

Shortly after I finished my crash course on adoption language, I was part of a discussion that demonstrated to me that it would've been useful to include information on race in that column. I was watching my six-year-old daughter, Tia, play soccer one evening when one of the other spectators asked me if the girl with the brown skin was my child. The lady sitting beside her was openly appalled at the question. "You shouldn't single out her skin colour," she admonished loudly. I understood where the second lady was coming from – people often have a nervous reaction when faced with dialogue involving race – but I disagreed with her.

Many people don't like to talk about race because they're scared of coming across as racist or ignorant. But it's not a racist stance to see colour (or eye shape or an accent); it's a fact of life. We don't have to (and shouldn't) classify ourselves or others all the time, but there's nothing wrong with doing so when it's relevant. Which it was in this case: Tia was the only African American child on the field when the question was posed. Her skin colour happened to be her

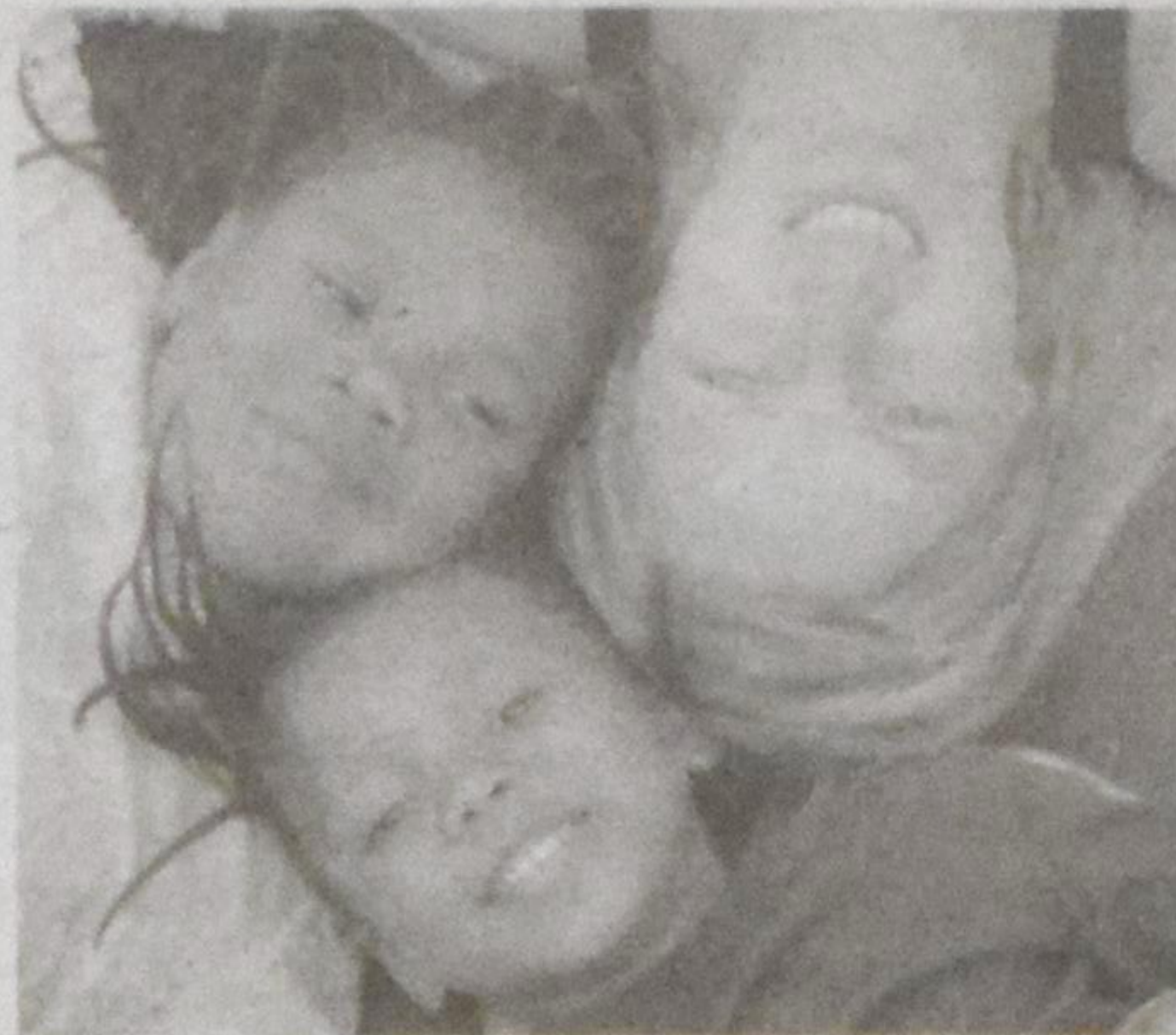
most obviously identifiable feature.

Noticing differences in race is not a problem in our society; the problem occurs when people judge the worth of others based on those differences, or when people act as if those differences simply do not exist. When we ignore racial differences, we leave the impression that there's something *wrong* or shameful with having certain physical characteristics. Take the mom in the grocery store who whispers "Shhhhh" to the young child who asks loudly why someone's skin is brown. She's sending the message that brown skin is so bad and so embarrassing that it can't even be talked about. She certainly wouldn't respond that way if the child was asking why someone's eyes were a certain colour.

Be open

Parents who want to raise kids who are comfortable with race should start talking with their kids about racial diversity when they're very young. They should be proactive when it comes to race, as they are when they teach their children to look both ways before they cross the street or to stay away from drugs. They shouldn't assume their kids will pick up tolerance and racial sensitivity all on their own.

Instead of shushing them, parents of curious kids should remember that noticing racial differences is a normal and healthy stage of development. They should explain to their children that God created people



with a variety of skin colours, hair colours, eye colours, etc. They should do their best to avoid making race seem like a big or intimidating topic, and they should try not to make kids feel awkward for asking questions about specific racial characteristics.

I'm certainly not an expert on race relations, but I have learned a little by raising two kids with different colour skin than my own. So without further ado, here are some things I think we should keep in mind. Let's call it my second personal adoption crash course: transracial adoption – three things to remember.

1. **Do not declare yourself colourblind** – People, including kids, are not colourblind. Everyone sees colour. And there's nothing wrong with that. Differences are okay. They're not bad. Some of us have brown skin, some white, some blue eyes,

some green, some blonde hair, some black. God made us all unique, all in his image.

2. **Do not use outdated terms** – Oriental, Coloured, and Indian are outdated terms. In fact, they're considered offensive. Black, white, Asian and Aboriginal are currently accepted. Socially predominant terms evolve and change over time. If you're not sure which term to use, check out your local newspaper. Reporters have style books which keep them up-to-date.
3. **Do not make stereotypical assumptions** – Black people don't always excel at sports; Asians aren't always good at math. These race-specific stereotypes may seem like positive assumptions but they place unnecessary expectations and pressure on average, ordinary people to be the best. Life is stressful enough – who needs that?

Thank you for reading this addition to a previous column. I hope today's crash course will aid you as you take on the important challenge of raising healthy, race-conscious children.

Denise Dykstra lives in Edmonton, Alberta, with her husband, Ray, and their five kids. She's proud to be a part of a transracial family. She can be contacted at dykstras@telus.net.



Intangible Things

Heidi VanderSlikke

I don't usually get up in the middle of the night for my kids anymore. I made an exception for Willene and Daniel (my daughter-in-law and seven-month-old grandson). When they returned from B.C. and landed in Toronto at 6:20 a.m., I wanted to be there to bring them home. On the road by 4:00 in the morning, I drove through darkness blacker than the coffee in my travel mug.

An hour later the pre-dawn glow crept across the horizon, washing the streets of Orangeville in its unique hues. The quaint downtown buildings were a muddle of pale watercolours. Head and shoulders above the other rooftops the steeple of a church poked up, incandescent against the dim sky. I had passed this church dozens of times over the years, never really paying attention. Now as the imminent daylight pushed back the night, I admired its gleaming elegance.

Not far down the street another steeple reflected the scarce light with eye-catching grace. A few blocks beyond that, on the opposite side, yet another silvery-gray spire appeared, impossible for me to ignore. The pattern continued after I rounded the corner to Airport Road, and through each little village and town along the way. It was as

if these towers had risen suddenly, just to guide me along – impromptu milestones for the journey.

Superstition or symbol?

Theories about the origins of church steeples abound. Some say they're an adaptation of pagan obelisks used by Egyptian sun worshipers, or the phallic symbols of ancient fertility gods. Another explanation is that the spiky towers were intended to ward off evil spirits and demons poised to attack the church. I'm hard pressed to understand how or why a Christian church would want to adopt such superstitious relics as its own. (Then again, given the contemporary trend to accommodating popular culture and pseudo sciences, maybe it's not such a reach.)

I far prefer the idea that steeples were installed to point the church heavenward, or to lift the name of Christ high above all else in the community. In some European towns the church is literally the centre. All roads lead to and from the church. The church tower is the focal point of the town, symbolic of God watching over all. Sadly, in many cases only the symbolism remains, Christianity no longer preeminent in modern life.

Church steeples: points worth pondering

Whatever their true origin, on that particular morning those steeples provided points of light for me to ponder. While other buildings blended inconspicuously, the churches distinguished themselves with their prominent towers. The familiar route now took on a new significance. I had never before noticed how many churches stood along the way, their steeples protruding like lighthouses guiding ships through deceptively treacherous shorelines. I considered the metaphor appropriate.

Shining lights

Spiritually speaking, the world we live in is shadowy at best. Our eyes have adjusted so well to the low light we tend to think we're seeing clearly – that life makes sense. Then something ugly or perverse or painful happens, and we realize the intensity of the darkness. But the light isn't totally absent. It's tentative, obediently waiting for an unknown cue, meanwhile casting its glow across the landscape of life as we know it.

In the midst of all that, the church stands out. Or it should. I don't mean odd-looking towers on top of brick and mortar buildings. I mean the true church – the Body of Christ – the people who are, in the words of Peter,

living stones being built into a spiritual house. We're supposed to be beacons of light, reflecting God's love and goodness into the world around us. We must exist in the midst of our society, and yet if we're not distinct in some sense, there's something crucial missing from our structure.

As I approached the edge of Toronto the sun rose over the city, extinguishing thousands of streetlights with its brilliant rays. Traffic grew heavier and I thought of the two and a half million people who live there. Some were heading home from nightshift, others going to work. Many were probably still cozy in their beds, squinting through sleepy eyes at the new day, as I normally would have been.

I marveled that each one of them is created in the image of God, whether they acknowledge it or not. And I wondered how many churches (with or without steeples) adorn the city streets, daring to stand out from the rest of the scenery, faithfully shining the light of hope and healing into a dark and hurting world.

Heidi VanderSlikke (vanderslikke@everus.ca) lives in Harriston, Ont.



Kuyper/Transitions

The Temple of the Holy Spirit (Part I)

...built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone
In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.

Ephesians 2:20, 21

Abraham Kuyper

Pentecost is the feast of the Holy Spirit, but *what* exactly does the church confess about the Holy Spirit on that day?

The Spirit is poured out, just as Jesus had promised. Poured out from the Father through Christ. Poured out once and for all. He was poured out in a way that has never been repeated; it was a totally unique and a once-for-all-event.

He came down with a mighty rushing wind as if the heavenly spheres were being ripped open. The tongues of fire that came upon the believers gave a reflection of the eternal light separating into individual flames on the heads of all who believed. Even more miraculous was the fact that their tongues were loosened and a sacred energy began to flow. It now appeared that the languages of all the nations were becoming the common property of the church, and all of this turned into praise, worship and thanksgiving for the holy name of the Lord. Certainly we are all agreed on these details. These are the facts. It was a miraculous event, and this is the content of what we recount and tell our children about this day.

Holy questions

But how do we go on from here? We cannot stop now.

At Christmas time we naturally began to ask questions such as, "Where did this baby come from?" and, "Why did he come at this time?" and, "How was this a miraculous birth?" and, "Why was he placed in a manger?" Similarly, at Pentecost many questions arise. We want to understand what is happening and just what the outpouring of the Spirit really means. Why did it take place at that time, and how does this event relate to us today as we direct our hearts to live in faith?

Don't forget, long before the Pentecost event God was at work in Israel, among the Patriarchs and all the way back to Paradise. The Holy Spirit was also active all this time. For in those days too, the elect were called and sanctified. And so now, when a soul turns from death to life in our times, it is only because of the descent of the Holy Spirit and his indwelling. Therefore we give thanks to the Spirit as well as the Father and the Son every time our cold hearts are warmed and our lifeless condition is quickened and revived.

How do we understand this? We could say it's one or the other. Maybe Pentecost was only a spiritual awakening of the faithful gathered in the upper room – but then we face the question of its meaning for us; or we could regard it as a singular once-for-all event of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but then we need to explain the work of the Spirit in Israel, in comparison to the waves of spiritual awakening in our own time.

The gospel of John affirms the truth of the second option. John 7:39 tells us that the Holy Ghost was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified. This does not exclude the prior work of the Holy Spirit on earth. It is a mysterious statement, which we encounter at the celebration of Pentecost. And the church must search the Scriptures to find out how we are to understand the distinction between the work of the Holy Spirit before, during and after Pentecost,

if indeed he was only poured out at Pentecost in Jerusalem as a singular event, now more than eighteen centuries ago. This is the question which we must try to resolve as we reflect on Pentecost, and we hope to do so in a clear, concise and understandable summary.

One body

The salvation of the Lord God and its glorious fulfilment is not a matter of gathering individual, independent, unconnected souls, but the establishment of a *community*, a *body*, a *people*, a *flock*. All the saints of the past and the believers today form a whole, they belong together and are united in a bond established by God. However, that does not mean that all people are or should be the same. They are all unique, and they all differ one from another. Just as in our human body a fingernail differs from an eye and a hair differs from an artery, so also in the body of Christ the members are different from one another, with their own make-up, function and purpose. On Pentecost we must not forget that all the saints together form *one Body* and we really must focus our attention on that one *Body of Christ*.

Scripture speaks frequently about this body of the Lord and uses specifically two images to describe it, a *body* or a *temple*. A *temple* represents all the stones that are incorporated into the building which rises up by God's design and in which the Lord God himself resides. But Scripture itself shows us that the image of a temple is too mechanical and external as an analogy, while the imagery of a *body* is much richer in revealing the deep thoughts of God, for we read "...the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord" (Eph 2:21), and "you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house..." (1 Peter 2:5). Both these expressions portray the temple as a living organism or body, because only a living body *grows*, and only in a body can we speak of the component parts as *living*.

The reason why the apostles keep coming back to the imagery of a *temple* can be explained from the Old Testament dispensation. We know that for all the nations a temple was really a shell where an idol resided as a body of stone which represented their god. Similarly, Israel also had a temple, but it was empty, without an image of a god, and only the radiance of the Lord filled those halls. This temple was a foreshadowing, nothing more. It pointed to Christ whose flesh and blood would be the real temple in which God would appear on earth. *Temple* thus is the word used for the shadow of things to come, whereas *body* is the word which applies to the same reality for the time of fulfilment. However, both point to that one great all-encompassing fact that the Lord God does not string his people together like a necklace of pearls, but gathers them together into one great *body*, as church of the living God, the *flock* of the Good Shepherd. These are the people of his own possession, the *congregation* of his saints.

This meditation by
Abraham Kuyper has been translated by
Jack Van Meggelen (jack@vanmeggelen.ca),
who lives in Willowdale, Ontario.

My window seat

Mendelt Hoekstra



We've moved!

We've taken all our earthly belongings, packed them in boxes and buckets, put those boxes and buckets into vans and moved them into the garage of our new house. My back muscles are recovering. This is my fourth move in ten years, so I'm used to the process, but there is a different feeling to moving this time. Each other move has been either for more bedrooms or for moving closer to work.

This time we are leaving a home that was my 32-year-old wife, Marisa's, last earthly home – a home that we learned in, a home that we loved in, a home that we brought two children into and, eventually, a home that we lost in.

Packing everything in boxes was a lot of work. After a few years with three kids, it is relatively easy to accumulate too much "stuff."

Memories

I found some stuff that I forgot I had. That was easy to recycle or donate. I found some things that I had been looking for earlier, and there were a few things that I found that brought back instant, vivid and difficult memories of Marisa.

There was the nick in the kitchen counter that she made when the knife slipped off the cutting board. We laughed then. I wouldn't have thought years ago when it happened that it would evoke such emotion so many years later. I laughed again.

There was the stone work around the fireplace. We discussed for hours and hours which stone we should pick, and, eventually, Marisa's choice was the one we ordered. I didn't really like that stone, but when I was leaving for the last time the stone looked oddly perfect to me.

The room with our piano was a difficult room to leave. We rehearsed for hundreds of worship services in that room. Marisa, a highly accomplished and talented pianist, could make that piano sing.

Not being a talented gardener myself, the gardens were Marisa's (and her dad's) territory. They weren't magazine-worthy, but they were healthy and had a good variety of colour and shape. The trees in our backyard, especially the ones we planted ourselves, brought good memories to mind. And there was that tree – the one we planted from seed, hoped would grow and now is over six feet and healthy. I'm looking forward to driving by that tree and watching its growth.

The deck, the garage shelving units, the crack in the basement floor, the beautiful and many windows – the list went on. I seemed to cherish those things more because I knew I was not going to be seeing them again.

How to leave?

Frankly, part of me hoped that I would find a note. Before Marisa died, she knew that we were not going to stay in that house. She gave me her blessing on finding a new house and moving forward from this place. And, although I've never been a mushy, Hallmark-card type of person, a big part of me wanted to find a note from Marisa. Maybe there would be one under the rug or behind the couch? A note that said "I'm in heaven now; I hope the move goes well." Or "lift with your legs, not your back" with a smiley face underneath. Grief can do strange things with your mind.

I didn't know what would be the most appropriate way to say "goodbye" to the house, so I asked our three kids, ages 3, 5 and 7, how they wanted to leave the house. They said "with Timbits" (small, round pieces of donut). So we drove to our trusty Tim Hortons and then went to each room of the house. We all ate a timbit and told what we remembered about the house. It was meaningful and telling.

Then we sat in the piano room. We prayed. And then it seemed right to leave.

Mendelt Hoekstra (mendelt.hoekstra@gmail.com) is the founder and director of the Music Therapy program at Bethesda, an organization owned and operated by the Mennonite Brethren Conference of Ontario, that supports adults with developmental possibilities. He lives near St. Catharines, Ont. with his three children.

Culture



Wherever two or more are (virtually) gathered in my name ...

(Part II of "We are the Borg")

In an earlier article I wrote about the way that humans and machines are being fused together into something new – the cyborg.

Examples of cyborgs include obvious examples like people with hearing aids and prosthetic mechanical limbs, as well as less obvious (and more common) examples like iPod users, Blackberry addicts and people who rely on GPS for directions.

And anyone who spends a few hours a day surfing the web is also part of a machine.

Trying to get your spouse to log out of a Facebook session, for instance, can be like trying to separate the cream out of your coffee. And, sometimes, flipping the circuit breaker is the only way to get kids to get off the Xbox and to the dinner table.

It's not only that we use machines. We are fused to them.

Our identity

This presents us with a dilemma unique to our times. Simply put, it's like this:

Christians believe man is made in the image of God. As such, people are creative. We have created machines to serve us, just as we serve God. As time goes by, we are becoming more and more attached to these creations of ours and spend more and more time with them, and less with each other.

There will come a day that a person could have mechanically augmented eyesight, hearing, motor function and memory. So if my walking, seeing, thinking, hearing – even my heart itself – are all enhanced or replaced by a machine, who am I? A creature of God or a truly self-made man?

Probing questions

There is a range of responses to this question among Christians, varying from absolute rejection of all technology (not a very practical alternative in our wired world) to absolute embrace of technology (not a choice that honours our God-given ability to discern and reason). Somewhere in between, however, some interesting discussions are taking place.

One place where this discussion is happening is on the A-Team Blog (<http://afcm.in.org/ateam/>), a website created by four bright young Christians: Roger N. Overton (co-author of *The New Media Frontier: Blogging, Vlogging, and Podcasting for Christ*), Amy K. Hall, David Nilsen and Aaron Snell.

The A-Team raises questions like "what is a Christian response to Twitter?" and "is church necessary in an age where people can gather together online?" The articles on the site bring together an unchanging and biblical view of the world with a rapidly evolving technological culture. The combination makes for powerful and entertaining reading.

In a sense, the mere presence of a site like the A-Team blog helps us answer the fundamental question: what is the place of the Christian in a technological world?

Complex answers

I would argue that we ought to be right in the thick of it, offering something different, relevant and true to all the people out there in danger of getting lost amid all the shiny toys and nifty gadgets of our times.

Christians ought to be asking questions – challenging questions – about what it means to have machines serving and augmenting us, even as we serve God and are held in the palm of his hand.

Christians need to gather together – online – and use that medium to reflect on what it means to live a Christ-centred life.

But we also need to meet together out in the real world, because the gospel is incarnational, and as much as we believe Christ is present when two or more people gather (even when they gather online) it's difficult – if not impossible – to show the face of Christ to one another only on the web.

Need for togetherness

In the end, what we crave most is real community. We desire to be close to one another, because God created us that way. Our machines may serve us, amuse us and even help us – all of which are good – but they do not substitute for us.

Playing in the park with your friends will always be better than playing online. Listening to a concert with others will always be a richer, more profound experience than listening to an iPod on the train. Hearing a sermon or singing together – even when the sermon runs long or the songs all sound the same – is always a richer worship experience than anything we experience in front of a screen, because we are doing it face-to-face.

Fundamentally, we need one another, which is why I believe we will always find a way to gather together, no matter how far our technology may carry us or change us. Christians are in a unique position to spread that message of love and community, because it is at the heart of our belief.

We know that it is human to cry on one another's shoulder and to come together and laugh with one another. Even if the arms that we hold one another with are man-made metal, we know that we are ultimately made in the image of God, and that our deepest desire, ultimately, is to serve him.

Lloyd Rang (lloyd.rang@rogers.com)
is a member of Rehoboth CRC in
Bowmanville Ontario.

Tarek Fatah takes on the Jihadists

Harry Antonides

Muslims are often criticized for failing to speak up publicly against those Muslims who have turned Islam into an ideology of hatred and violence. Tarek Fatah does not belong to that silent majority. On the contrary, his new book *Chasing a Mirage: The Tragic Illusion of an Islamic State* is a courageous and eloquent testimony against those who have turned Islam into a political program of conquest and stagnation.

Tarek Fatah was born in Pakistan where he was active in the late 1960s as a left-wing student. He worked in the print and broadcast media in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. He immigrated to Canada in 1987 where he has become well-known as an outspoken critic of Islamic extremism. Here is a sample of his unambiguous way of presenting the problem:

Islam came to free humanity from the clutches of the clergy. Instead, the religion of peace has become a prisoner of war, held captive by the very priesthood it came to eliminate. Muslims have been double-duped for centuries – lied to by their leaders and clerics who supposedly hold the keys to heaven. (87)

Free only in Canada

After the attacks of 9/11 Fatah founded the secular Muslim Canadian Congress. He fearlessly argues that Muslims should reject the Islamic state in favour of the state of Islam. *Chasing a Mirage* is a masterful exposition of what the author perceives to be the enduring clash between political Islam, bent on domination, and spiritual Islam that enables the free flow of ideas and beliefs. Or as he puts it: "For it is only here in Canada that I can speak out against the hijacking of my faith and the encroaching spectre of a new Islamo-fascism."

Chasing a Mirage is an excellent source of information about the early, violent spread of Islam, its internal feuds and divisions, and the contemporary clash between militant Islam and the West. He describes the attempt in 2003 to introduce sharia law in the province of Ontario, which failed in part because of strong opposition by Muslim women groups and the Muslim Canadian Congress.

Islamist infiltration

In early 2003 Fatah attended a meeting of some 2000 young Muslims at the Toronto Convention Centre. He was unprepared for a lecture by a Kuwaiti politician and member of the Muslim Brotherhood, Tareq Al Suwaidan, who told the audience, "Western civilization is rotten from within and nearing collapse ... it [the West] will continue to grow until an outside force hits it, and you will be surprised at how quickly it falls."

Fatah asks the questions that should haunt everyone concerned about the future of this country, especially our political

leadership: "Why were these Muslim youth, born and educated in Canada, cheering the fall of the West? Did they not consider themselves to be part of the West?"

Chasing a Mirage provides a lot of details about the many organizations in Canada active in promoting a radical Islamic agenda, including the Council on American-Islamic Relations and the Muslim Student Association. Fatah writes that these and other Islamic organizations are far more sophisticated than naïve Westerners recognize. He explains:

These are well-oiled, foreign inspired politically driven machines that have their hooks in every corner of Western society. It is not a coincidence that so many Muslims who were just average American teenagers in high school get recruited by radicals and end up emerging from universities with a deep-rooted hatred for the country that has been their home all their lives. (313)

A curtain of fear

As this book makes very clear, moderate Muslims have to battle not only their radical fellow Muslims, but they are also up against the gullibility and naiveté of the Western mainstream, which often responds submissively to the aggressive Islamist agenda. This servile attitude – a form of voluntary dhimmitude – motivated eleven Canadian academics with roots in Iran, Palestine, Pakistan, and Bangladesh to issue a joint statement in *The Toronto Star*.

They wrote that a curtain of fear has descended on the intelligentsia of the West, including Canada. Their fear to be misunderstood as Islamophobic has silenced them. "Canada's writers, politicians and media have imposed a frightening censorship on themselves, refusing to speak their minds, thus ensuring that the only voices being heard are that of the Muslim extremists and the racist right."

Chasing a Mirage is a compelling testimony to the bitter truth about radical Islam and the blindness of the West. It also testifies to the courage and determination of the author, who has experienced first hand the hatred and vilification of the enemies of freedom and civility. He has been threatened with death but refuses to be silenced.

As a Christian I do not share Tarek Fatah's faith, but I deeply appreciate his decision to publish this timely wake-up call. He deserves the profound gratitude of every freedom-loving Canadian for cutting through the platitudes and double-talk that now poison the public discourse about Islam.

Harry Antonides (hantonides@sympatico.ca) is retired director of the former Work Research Foundation. He lives in Willowdale, Ontario.

Review

Igor the Acolyte: the story of a Caucasian boy with an Indonesian soul

Reviewed by Bert Witvoet

It's not every day that an ambitious work like Igor the Acolyte comes along in the Reformed community in Canada.

Although the author, Aren Geisterfer, calls his book "essentially fiction," the story is quite closely connected to the author's own experiences as a boy growing up in Indonesia. Those of us who know Aren know that he was born in Indonesia, experienced concentration camp life during the occupation of Indonesia by the Japanese, and that his parents both died before the liberation. To this day he suffers the effects of torture and traumatic flashbacks. To what extent Aren can be substituted for Igor is, of course, impossible to verify for the reader. Because of that we have to basically accept the book as a novel that gives insight into life in Indonesia before, during and after the Japanese invasion. But this reviewer, who knows the author and has read some other material from his hand, estimates that most of the material that involves Igor is autobiographical.

Paradise lost

Aren Geisterfer takes us through the idyllic years of Igor's youth. Igor has a Caucasian body, which he inherited from his parents, but his soul is Indonesian. He loves nothing better than to jump into a river naked with his Indonesian playmates, and to experience the intimacy of his Hindu-raised nanny Timah. The latter influences Igor's sense of self, including an awareness of his sexuality that sets him apart from his siblings and other Dutch boys his age. For those readers who expect an innocent tale full of Dutch Calvinist mores and reticence, the book will be a total surprise. Igor grows up with a comfortable attitude towards his physical body, and loves to touch his "manhood" while either playing, swimming or just standing around. In that sense, he blends in well with the Tengerese people. Kissing each other as a sign of friendship is normal among the boys, as is touching each other's private parts.

This paradise-like setting is cruelly disrupted by the invasion of the soldiers of Emperor Hirohito into Indonesia in January, 1942. It does not take long for Dutch and other foreign families to be sent to concentration camps. Here they experience hunger, harsh

punishment and torture. "The cruelty and sadism displayed by the Sons of the Rising Sun became the most feared weapon in their arsenal," writes Geisterfer. (p.28) Igor's father and older brothers are separated from the mother and six children, including Igor. Igor (and Aren) ends up an orphan by the time the war was over.

Time of confusion

But even after the "liberation" from the Japanese in August 1945, the troubles of the Dutch in Indonesia are not over. The capitulation of Japan has come so suddenly after the dropping of the A-bomb, that none of the Western powers are able to take control of Indonesia. So the Americans appoint the Japanese forces in Indonesia to protect the whites. A very unreal situation develops – their former enemy and torturer now becomes the one

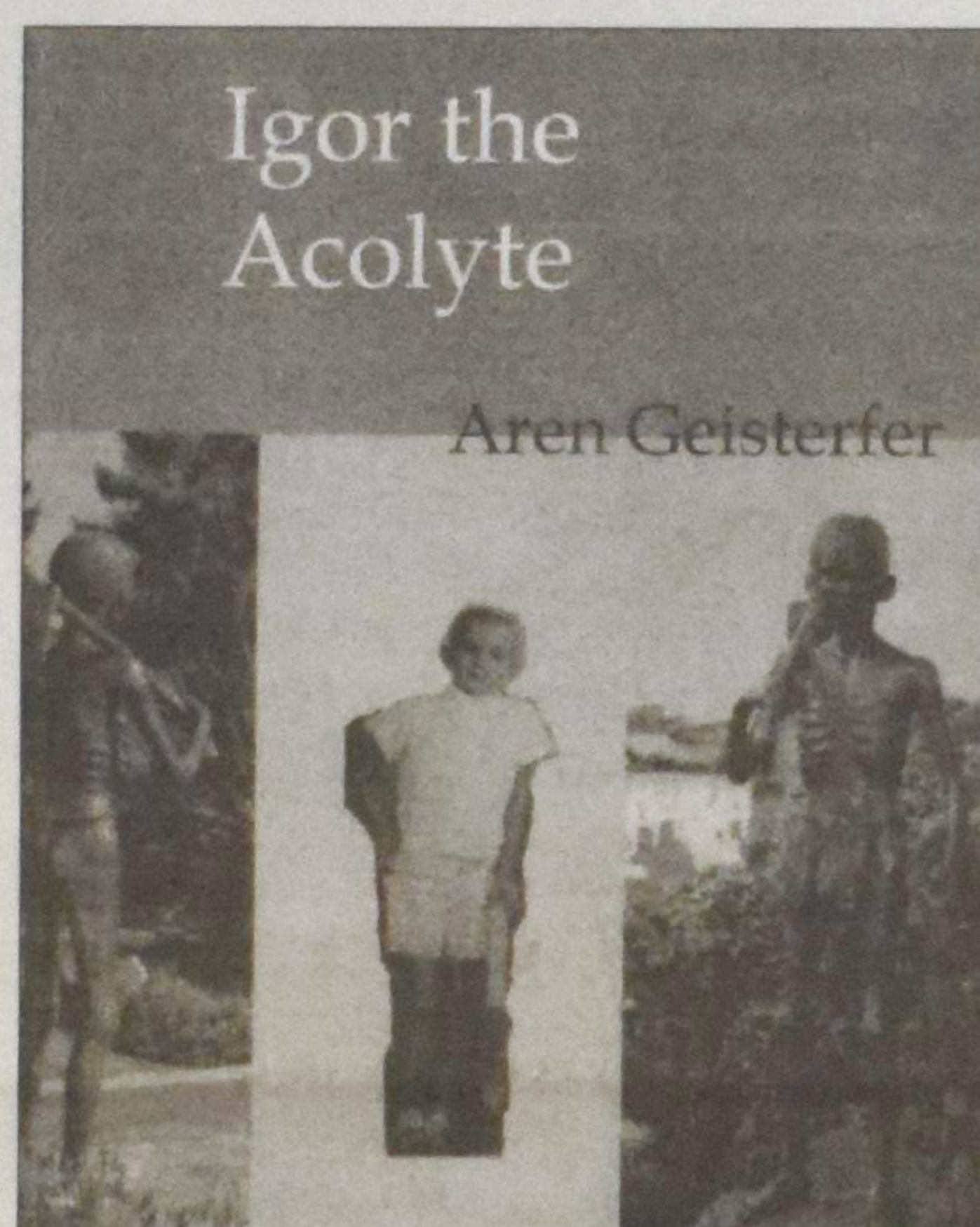
who has to protect the foreigners from the uprising of the Indonesian nationalists. A very dangerous period ensues, and many people lose their lives. Families that had been reunited or stayed together during the terrible times of Japanese occupation now are threatened and sometimes torn apart and killed by the new enemy of the colonialists – various factions of murderous Indonesian freedom fighters. All of this is very confusing and painful for Igor. He has been looking forward to being united with his Indonesian friends after the war. But, says Igor, "The friends I expected to meet became my enemies, while my enemies became my protectors and sheltered me from deathly harm." (p.451)

National sins

The author acknowledges the exploitation of Indonesia by the Dutch for 300 years. Igor and his parents were critical of the Dutch, who did not prepare the indigenous population for self-government but were more interested in enriching their own country far away. Igor's mother felt that what happened to the Dutch in Indonesia at the hand of the Japanese and the indigenous freedom fighters was God's punishment on the selfish

and racist Dutch people.

The author also vividly depicts and regularly ridicules the despicable cruelty and self-righteousness of the Japanese soldiers and camp officials. They are totally arbitrary in their decisions. Motivated by anger, which is easily aroused when a prisoner does not bow deep enough, for example, they often resort to horrible punishments.



Book cover and the author, Aren Geisterfer

They are easily provoked. They are, after all, the Sons of the Rising Sun and the superior race led by the divine Emperor.

One particular scene of horror takes place on a beach. Various young camp boys, including Igor, are forced to drive stakes into the seabed at low tide. They have no clue why. Days later, they find out. Prisoners of war, many of them Dutch, British, Australian and American, arrive in trucks, all of them tied up and lying in large baskets made of split bamboo, generally used for transporting pigs. The boys are forced to drag these baskets to the poles in the seabed and tie them securely to the stakes. After that the tide comes in, and the boys know that the screaming and crying prisoners are drowning.

Triumph of love

What lights up this difficult account is the faithfulness and love shown by Igor's mother and other Christians like her. Anna Gottlieb, Igor's mother, stands as a beacon of light and hope in the midst of this tragic period of time. Igor also reflects that kind of compassion. In that way he follows the path of his mother and his nanny. Igor was one of the few

boys in the camp who kept up his Bible reading and prayer. He was regularly called upon by nuns in the camp to comfort dying people, mostly older men, and to pray with them. Igor has a deep faith, but also a questioning spirit. Where is God in all this pain and suffering? he asks many a time.

There is so much more in the book. It's a study in anthropology and theology, as well as politics and

This is a very important story that should be read and absorbed, especially by members of Dutch and Reformed communities. Aren Geisterfer is a faithful witness to the failures of Dutch colonialism, Japanese imperialism and Indonesian nationalism. He highlights the need for all of us to learn from other cultures, also in the area of sexuality and social intimacy. He shows a deep love for covenant theology and open-ended spirituality that centres on the resurrected Christ.

Just a few issues ago, I reviewed a biographical and fictional account of Dr. Louis Praamsma, who was a pastor in the Christian Reformed Church. Aren Geisterfer is also a pastor in the Christian Reformed Church, although retired. He was for many years a campus minister at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. These two men could not have been more different when you compare their lives and ministries. But I for one am glad that there was room in the Christian Reformed Church for both, although

Geisterfer was probably more at the fringes than Praamsma. Both were and are men of great integrity and deep faith. I encourage readers to take up both books and see how Calvinist church leaders can reflect the diversity of the Body of Christ in ways that are both challenging and enriching.

Aren Geisterfer. *Igor the Acolyte*. Chelsea Books (www.chelseabooks.ca) 2008. 663 pp. \$42.95 plus mailing cost. **This book can be ordered from:** Rev. Aren Geisterfer by email: arengerfer@sympatioc.ca, or at 28 Rue Osgoode, Gatineau QC J9H 1R7. Tel. 819-684-3959 (no calls between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.).

psychology. It's a struggle between faith and doubt. It's a story filled with suspense and danger.

Challenge to readers

From a literary point of view Igor the Acolyte has some weaknesses, not the least of which is its lack of compactness. The material is far too expansive and should have been reduced to half its length. There is too much repetition of ideas and reflections. It has the feel of being compiled from separate accounts, each of which makes the same points. It would be too bad if people were scared away by the sheer volume of the novel – we're talking about 658 large pages that resemble the pages of a telephone directory. Had the book been published in normal book size there would have been 1300 pages.

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Classifieds

Anniversaries		Obituaries
 <p>HENK AND GAIL BOUWERS</p> <p>feel blessed to be celebrating their 50th Anniversary with their children and grandchildren. Praise God!</p> <p>An Open House will be held at their home on August 22 from 2 to 4 p.m.</p> <p>Their home address is 64 Wiltse Town Road, Athens ON K0E 1B0</p>	<p>1964 August 8 2009</p> <p>With great joy and celebration, your children & grandchildren wish you</p>  <p>MARC AND DORA STROOBOSSCHER (nee Van Marrum)</p> <p>a blessed 45th Anniversary!</p> <p>The wedding text you chose 45 years ago has been a true guide and theme for your marriage, and it has inspired us all too!</p> <p><i>For this God is our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even to the end. Psalm 48:14</i></p> <p>With much love, Rick and Della – Thalia, Kristin, Nathaniel and Danielle Chris and Heather – Zoë, Phoebe and Nicholas Duane and Tracy – Taylor, Jordyn and Noah Marcella and Mike Peter</p> <p>Address: 50-11 Lakeside Drive St Catharines ON L2M 1P3</p>	<p>EILT HARTMAN</p> <p><i>For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16</i></p> <p>The Lord took home to himself a husband, father and grandfather at McMaster Hospital on Saturday, May 23, 2009, at the age of 70.</p> <p>He will be dearly missed by his loving wife, Hetty Hartman (nee Flokstra); children: Wayne & Annette Hartman, Duane & Veronica Neilson (nee Hartman); and grandchildren, Nathan, Teri, James, Anna and Alyssa Hartman, and Rebekka and Jenna Neilson.</p> <p>Dear brother of Berend & Carol Hartman, Diane & Andy Regnerus, Tina & Ralph Rodermond, Ann & Joe VanTuyl, Bert & Wilma Hartman, Blake Hartman and Deb Cameron. Dear brother-in-law of Coby Flokstra (predeceased), John & Evie Flokstra, Casey & Maryke Flokstra, Joe Flokstra, Grace & Henry Bloemsma, Andy & Margaret Flokstra, Jeanette & Greg Cross, Koop & Clara Hoekstra; and by many nieces, nephews and cousins.</p> <p>A memorial service was held on May 27, 2009 at Dundas Calvin Christian Reformed Church.</p> <p>Correspondence: Hetty Hartman, 221 York Rd, Dundas ON L9H 1N1</p> <p><i>We regret omitting the above obituary in the last issue.</i></p>
<p>September 5, 1959 September 5, 2009</p>  <p>STAN AND EVELYN VANDERWAL</p> <p>along with their children, grandchildren and great-grand child are celebrating 60 Years of Marriage on August 25, 2009.</p> <p>Come and join us on Saturday, August 29, 2009 for a Come & Go from 2 to 4 p.m. at Lions Harbor Park, 168 West St, Goderich, Ontario</p> <p>In case of rain: Trinity CRC, 321 Suncoast Dr., Goderich, Ont.</p> <p>Mailing address: 210 Mill Rd, Goderich ON N7A 4A2 Info: kimbauer@sympatico.ca or 519-276-0755</p> <p><i>"Our Wedding was many years ago, the celebration continues..."</i></p>	 <p><i>Trusting in God's promise Hearts are fully blessed Finding as he promised Perfect peace and rest</i></p> <p>Peacefully at home in Oakville on Sunday July 19, 2009</p> <p>SIMON KOUWENHOVEN</p> <p>age 76 years.</p> <p>Beloved husband of Martha Kouwenhoven (nee Stellingwerff).</p> <p>Loving father of Wendy LaPierre (Philip), Stephen (deceased), Joanne Stronks (Glenn) and Franciska Kouwenhoven.</p> <p>Cherished grandfather of David (Rebecca), Marissa (David), Daniel, Alexander, Joshua, Amanda & great-grandfather of Eden.</p> <p>Simon was a retired Bank of Montreal executive after 37 years service and a faithful member of many congregations across Canada, most recently Clearview Christian Reformed Church.</p> <p>Home address: 2409 Marine Drive, Oakville ON L6L 1C6</p>	
<p>With hearts full of thanks to God together with our children and grandchildren we will be celebrating our 50th Anniversary.</p> <p>ANDY AND HENNY STRIKWERDA</p> <p>We are so thankful for God's blessing and guidance in our life and the lives of our children.</p> <p>To God be the glory.</p> <p>Ted & Debby Strikwerda – Luke Cyndie & Don Andringa – Andrea, Darren, Benjamin, Esther Dory Strikwerda Brenda & Colin Cragg – Bethany, Ethan John & Danielle Strikwerda – Emily, Julia, Hannah</p> <p>Address: 120 Wilmot Trail, Newcastle ON I1B 1A8</p>	<p>Congratulations and expressions of gratitude to</p>  <p>Adrian and Wendy Helleman</p> <p>Upon the occasion of their Retirement from 15 years of faithful service as professors with Christian Studies International in Russia, Nigeria, and Tanzania</p> <p>July 31, 2009</p> <p>Christian Studies International 13607 109 Avenue Edmonton AB T5M2G8</p> <p>Home address: 43 Northumberland Street Toronto ON M6H1R2</p>	<p>JOHANNES TANGELDER (B.Th., DRS. Th.)</p> <p>Peacefully, with his beloved wife Helen Louise (nee Feasby) at his side, Reverend Johannes Dirk Tangelder went home to be with his Lord and Savior on Thursday July 23, 2009.</p> <p>He was born in Amsterdam, Holland in 1936, and immigrated to Canada with his family in 1954. In 1958 he dedicated his life to the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church. His ministry took him to British Columbia, the Philippines and Ontario. He retired in 1995, and continued his ministry through his writing for many church publications.</p> <p>He was a wonderful father to Alice Ann and Tony Vandergeest, Bernard and Sharon, Johan and Carol, and Mary.</p> <p>He was a dear Opa to Christian, Brendan, Caleb, Rachel, Laura, Anna, Luke, Ethan, Cayla, and Julia.</p> <p>He is survived by three sisters, Connie, Enid and Ann.</p> <p><i>Safe in the arms of Jesus, safe in his gentle breast; there by his love o'er shadowed, sweetly my soul shall rest.</i></p> <p>Address: Helen Tangelder, 1409 Aldersbrook Rd London ON N6G 3N6</p>
<p>Wanted:</p> <p>James Ward Sheet Music</p> <p>Would like to purchase the sheet music to James Ward's 1974 release "James Ward Himself" and/or 1981 release "No Violence."</p> <p>Contact Andrew at 705-743-3092.</p>		<p>A charitable gift annuity offers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the peace of mind of a guaranteed lifetime income, largely tax free• the satisfaction of knowing that you will be providing a future gift for Redeemer University College <p>Blended rate of 6 - 10% (capital returned & interest) for those over 65. Please contact us for your own confidential, no-obligation quote. Information available on other gift-planning options as well.</p> <p>Redeemer University College 777 Garner Road East, Ancaster, Ontario L9K 1J4 905.648.2139 x4522 (James) stewardship@redeemer.ca</p> <p>REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE</p> <p>Stewardship Services</p>

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Direct general inquiries and applications to:

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As a liberal arts and sciences university college rooted in the Reformed tradition of Christianity, we seek candidates who are committed to teaching and pursuing scholarship from this perspective. Applicants should possess, or be near completion of, a Ph.D. Interested applicants should submit a curriculum vitae, three letters of reference, evidence of teaching quality, and a one-page or two-page statement describing their own faith commitment and how it shapes their academic work. The deadline for applications is **October 15, 2009** or until the position is filled.

Direct general inquiries and applications to:

Dr. Jacob P. Ellens, Vice President, Academic
Redeemer University College
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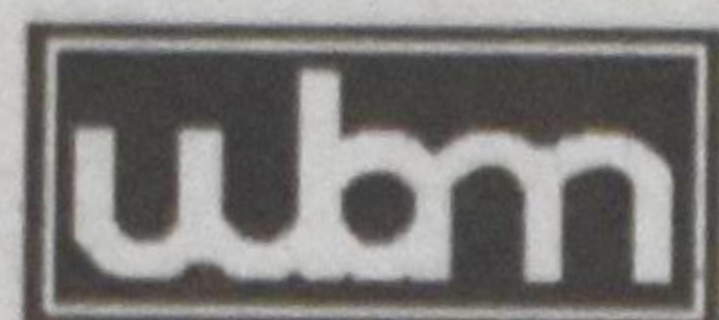
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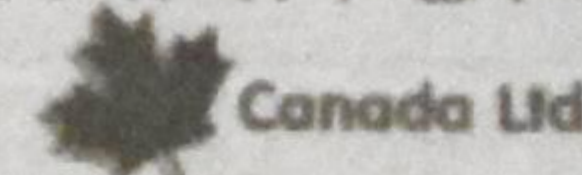


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Events/Advertising

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Aug 29 - 30 Frisian weekend. Saturday 1 pm. at Tillsonburg Fair Grounds. Camping available. Contact Edna 519-842-5684.

Aug 30 Fryske Tsjerktsjinst on Sunday, at 3 pm. in the Maranatha CRC in Woodstock. Foargonger: Ds. Hellinga. Oargelist: Mr. Dykstra. (Part of Frisian weekend)

Aug 30 Dutch Service will be held in the **Ancaster** Christian Reformed Church at 3:00 p.m. Rev. Jacob Kuntz will be preaching.

Sep 13 60th anniversary of Maranatha Christian Reformed Church in **Woodstock**. All former pastors, associates and congregational members are invited to a celebration service at 10:00 a.m. Lunch after the service. For further information call the church @519 539 5301 or email at mrcw@execulink.com.

Oct 3 The next Netherlands Bazaar will be held in the Thornhill Community Centre, 7755 Bayview Ave. in **Thornhill**, Ontario

Oct 17 Diaconal ministries hosts the 'Day of Encouragement' featuring Michael Card at Redeemer College, **Ancaster**. See upcoming ads.

Oct 24 Hamilton Young Adult reunion. See ad for details.

Nov 20 Christian Festival Concert at 7:30 pm at the Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto. Call 416-636-9779 or email landmkooy@rogers.com More in details in upcoming issues.

Hamilton Young Adults Reunion

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*The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled
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In commemoration of the
60th anniversary of

Maranatha Christian Reformed Church

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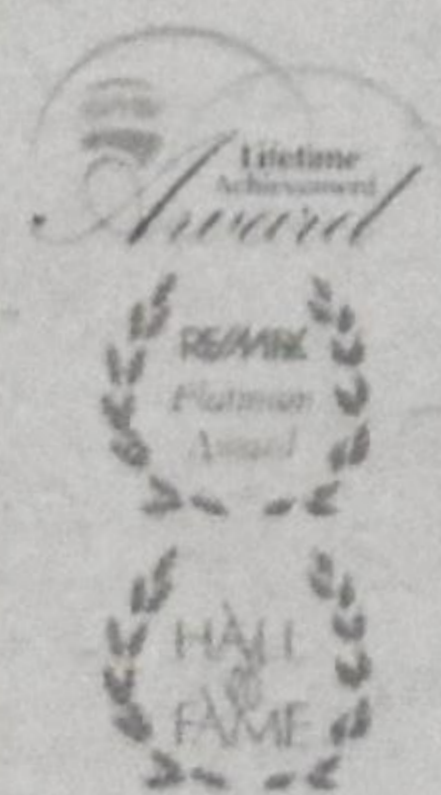
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News

Relationships rather than jail: How restorative justice changes lives

John de Vries, Jr. and Angela Reitsma Bick

When Julie*, a grade eleven student in Southern Ontario, first shoplifted, her parents were "very disappointed and angry." "Afterwards," she says, "I had a hard time talking to them because I felt like they couldn't get past what I did and weren't listening to what I had to say."

In Canada's traditional judicial system, Julie would be charged under the youth Criminal Justice Act and face a black mark on her permanent record. The police, however, chose instead to refer Julie to a non-profit organization called Restorative Justice Chatham-Kent (RJCK). This alternative justice system facilitates conferences between the victim, the offending youth, family members and trained community volunteers. The interaction focuses less on punishment and more on apology, reparation and restitution. The conferences may lead to counselling, specialized programs or community service for 10 to 100 hours.

Even though she was "really nervous about having to speak in a group" about the crime while "facing everyone, especially [her] parents," Julie found the RJCK conference to be a "very powerful experience." It was, she says, the first time her mother and father had listened to her.

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More importantly, conferences allow youth to see the impact of their actions on others, to take responsibility for their behaviour and, finally, to make amends. This kind of closure, for offender and victim alike, is as welcome

as it is rare.

Participation for the offender and the victim is voluntary; when one party leaves the discussion, the case reverts to the traditional criminal court process. In the past three years, however, RJCK has enjoyed a high success rate, with very few cases being sent back to police. A similar program in Western Canada documented that 97% of its referrals were handled by conferencing. Once the discussions and community service have been completed, the police are notified and the young person has no criminal record.

Fruitful friendship

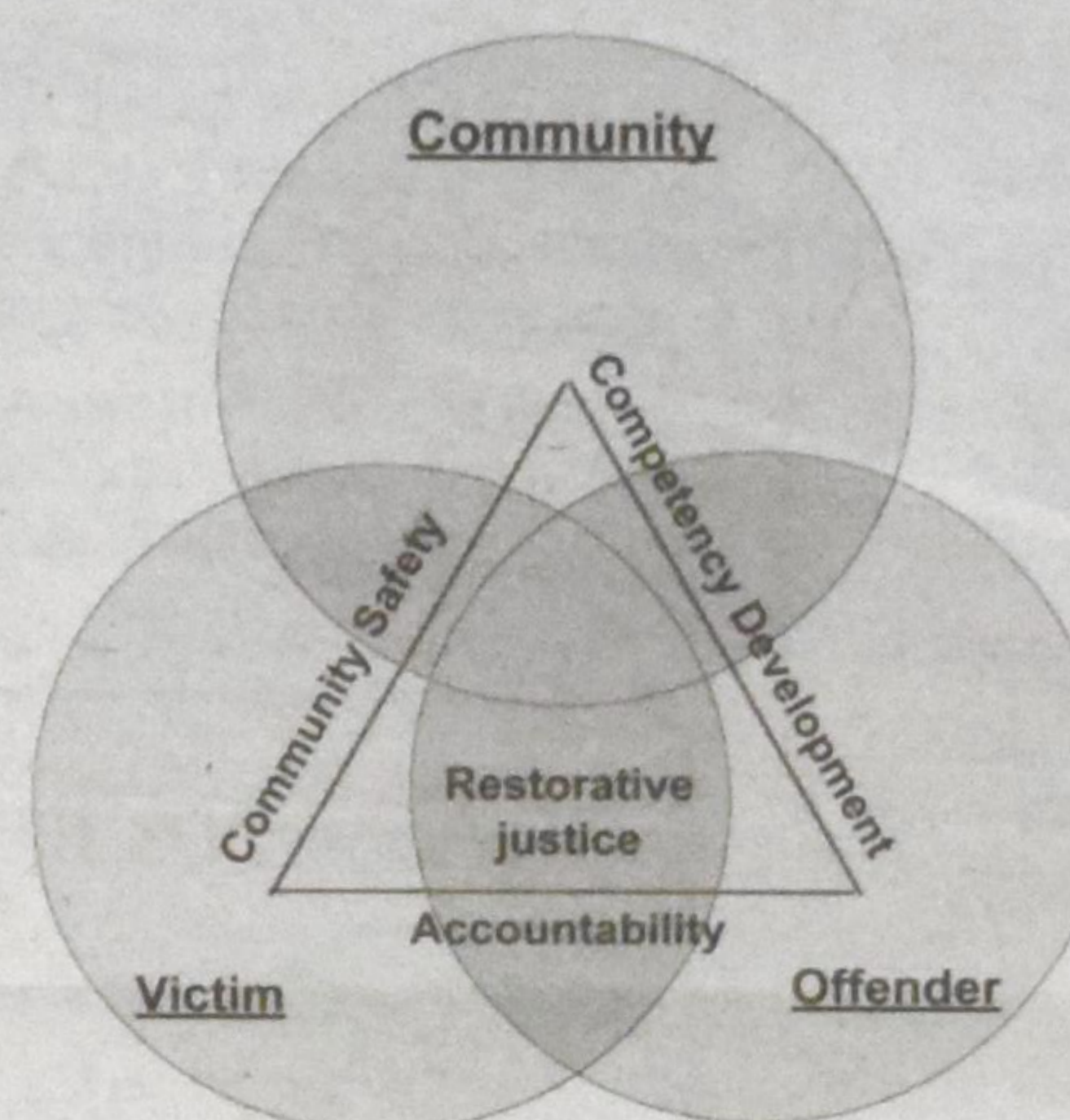
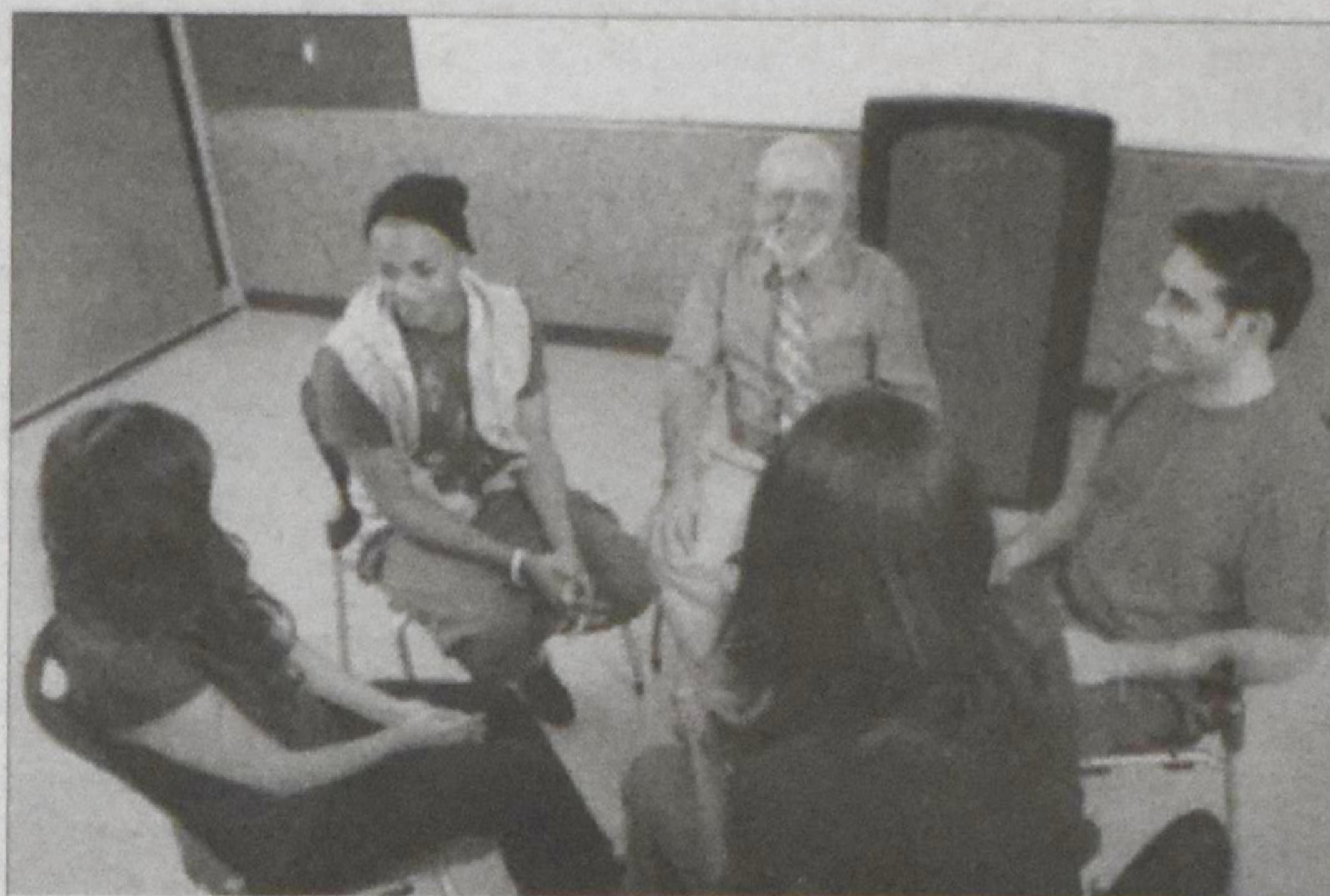
Seven years ago, Ralph Wolting, member of a local Christian Reformed church, had just finished reading *The Expanding Prison: The Crisis of Crime and Punishment and the Search for Alternatives* when he met with a friend from the Salvation Army, Gordon Reynolds. Reynolds had worked with troubled youth before, and the two mused about how to better help young offenders. Their conversation led to meetings among a wider group of persons interested in establishing a restorative justice program for the Chatham-Kent area. One year later, RJCK held its first board meeting.

In 2003, just as RJCK began, the government amended its Youth Criminal Justice Act slightly to include room for "extra judicial measures" in the pre-sentencing process. It took RJCK several more years to raise funds, develop conferencing procedures

and raise community awareness. By 2005, the fledgling organization received approval from the Ministry of Child and Youth Services to provide Youth Justice Conferencing, and in July of that year RJCK opened its doors to young offenders. In its four years of operation, 174 cases have been processed, all involving 12 to 17 year-olds.

Old origins

As one observer commented, restorative justice is similar to how "they settle matters in the rural villages of Jordan," in the Middle East. It's true that this process is a return to justice commonly



associated with pre-industrial societies. But the momentum for restorative justice in urban communities is growing. The first modern example of conferencing was with the Maori in New Zealand in 1989. Maori parents, concerned about the recurrence rates of their offending youth, felt that they were losing responsibility and influence with their own children. As a result, New Zealand passed a law that allowed for a restorative alternative to the traditional court system.

Julie observes that the "program has taught me that this crime affected everyone — the store, store owners, store employees, family members, community and myself." By including all parties in the conferencing process, restorative justice helps everyone on Julie's list: the victims gain closure; parents get a window back into their children's lives; the community saves tax dollars; and young offenders can avoid stigma and jail. "My parents are glad that I completed the program," Julie says. "We are able to talk to each other [now] and I am earning back their trust by making better choices."

*names have been changed

Rev. John de Vries Jr. has served many years as a Christian Reformed pastor and as a chaplain in correctional services and hospitals. He used his passion for restorative justice as the chair of Synod's 2005 Restorative Justice Study Report. Currently John is Associate Minister of the First London CRC.

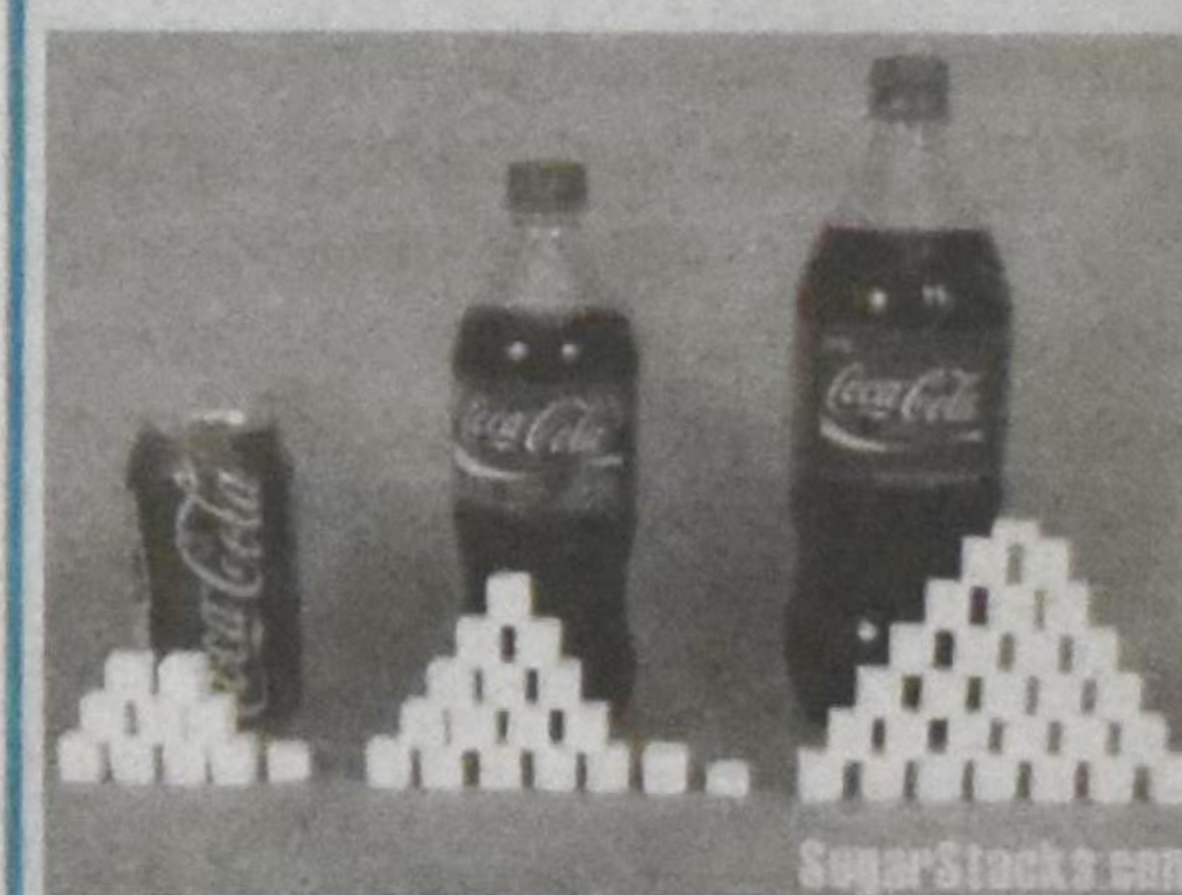
Odds & Trends

Solar eclipse awes millions

On Wednesday, July 22, Asian sky-watchers saw the longest solar eclipse of this century. Although eclipses are not that infrequent, they're often only visible from the ocean. This time, hundreds of millions of people witnessed the moon pass in front of the sun over India, southeast China and Japan's southern islands. At 9 in the morning, it was completely dark, as the moon blocked the sun for about six minutes. Worried about driving conditions during rush hour, police were present on Shanghai street corners. Reports indicate that during the eclipse, dogs barked, roosters crowed and stargazers all over Asia cheered. As one astronomical tour guide put it, the event was so amazing that "they couldn't help it."

Warning: scary graphics

"Would you eat a stack of 16 sugar cubes?" the folks at a new website wonder. Maybe not, but that's what happens when you drink Coke. Sugarstacks.com was launched this past May, and so many people liked the new website that its server crashed in a matter of days. The website demonstrates how many sugar cubes are in specific drinks, snacks, desserts and sauces. The site's creators point out that they don't differentiate between types of sugar (sucrose, fructose, honey, etc). They just use white sugar as a visual aid, with the goal being to uncover hidden sugar content.



A few companies have gotten angry with the negative publicity towards their products on the site. When the site posted a photo of a Kraft kids' drink called Capri Sun Pacific Cooler, they called it "a bag of water and high fructose corn syrup." The VP of Marketing at Kraft wrote them, insisting that there is no corn syrup in his brand, since Kraft switched to sugar last year. So Sugarstacks changed the post. Now it reads, "Basically a bag of water and sugar." Phew. Glad that's straightened out.

Angela Reitsma Bick

Sudoku 9x9 - Medium (138205383)

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